P R O T E C T I O N  O F  A U T H O R ’ S  C O P Y R I G H T

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'NO ORDINARY TOURISTS’

THE SECOND NEW ZEALAND DIVISION IN THE MIDDLE EAST,
1939-1943

Bryan Dunne

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Master of Arts
at the University of Otago, Dunedin,

New Zealand

1997
2 N.Z.E.F. TRIPS AND TOURS.

GOLDHABER TOURS.

LUXOR & ASWAN TRIP

Week-end trip to Upper Egypt (1200 miles return)

VISIT TO LUXOR-KARNAK-VALLEY OF THE KINGS-THEBES AND ASWAN.

This Excursion is being arranged to visit the World Famous Monuments of Upper Egypt which have stood the test of time for nearly forty Centuries.

From Friday 12th to Monday 15th December 1941

**Friday 12th**
- 1800 hrs — Leave Maadi Camp by buses for Cairo main station.
- 1950 hrs — Depart from Cairo by Aswan Express.
- 2nd class passengers will have dinner on train. 1st sitting 1950 hrs.
- 3rd class passengers will have dinner in camp before leaving.

**Saturday 13th**
- Breakfast on train.
- 1030 hrs. — Arrive Aswan.
- Visiting : Aswan Dam, Granite Quarries with half-finished Obelisk Island of Elephantine with Nilometer and Ruins of a Temple of Alexander the Great.
- Luncheon baskets will be taken in the gardens of Lord Kitchener's Island.
- 1540 hrs — Depart Aswan by express for Luxor.
- 1900 hrs — Arrive Luxor and transfer to Hotel for evening meal.
- 2100 hrs — Boat-trip on the Nile.
- Spend night at Hotel.

**Sunday 14th**
- 0800 hrs — Breakfast at Hotel.
- 0830 hrs — Leave Hotel and cross the Nile by boats.
- Drive by motor car to the ruins of Thebes.
- Visiting : Valley of the kings, with the Tombs of King Tut-ank-amon, King Seti I and King Ramses III — Valley of Thebes with the Temple of Deir-el-Bahari or Terrace Temple of Queen Hatshepsowet — The Ramesseum—The Colossi of Memnon.
- 1300 hrs — Return to Hotel for lunch.
- 1400 hrs — Leave Hotel by carriage and visit : The Temple of Karnak with Avenue of Sphinxes, Pylons, largest Obelisk and Sacred lake—And famous Temple of Luxor.
- 1830 hrs — Leave Hotel for Luxor station.
- 1900 hrs — Depart Luxor by express for Cairo.
- 2nd class passengers will have dinner on train.
- 3rd class passengers will have cold luncheon baskets on train.

**Monday 15th**
- 0700 hrs — Arrive Cairo main station, Return to camp by buses.
- Arrive Maadi 0745 hrs.

P.T.O.
For the members of the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force (2NZEF) and, in particular, the Second New Zealand Division (2(NZ) Division), World War Two would offer two profound, overlapping experiences. The first was the horrific experience of modern warfare, while the second was that of travel abroad. Foreign travel has, of course, been an integral part of the New Zealand experience of war this century, but this sort of travel has tended to be seen by most observers as incidental to the primary experience of battle. Yet, as this study argues, for many New Zealand soldiers, the experience of war was largely characterised by the images and metaphors of travel. Either consciously or unconsciously, the soldiers themselves exhibited a range of behaviour usually associated with the ‘ordinary’ tourists of peacetime.

As ‘soldier-tourists’, these New Zealanders journeyed abroad armed not only for conflict - but also, in another sense - for contact with the ‘new lands’ and ‘new places’ that this war offered. They were ‘armed’ with a set of images, gleaned from their predecessors and from contemporary popular culture, with which they prepared themselves for encountering the foreign, the ‘Other’. These preconceptions affected their ways of seeing and experiencing ‘familiar’ tourist destinations - and ultimately determined their reactions to them.

This study explores the ways in which the New Zealanders employed their ‘tourist gaze’ and their reactions to the places and people they encountered. In particular, it focuses on their experiences in three separate destinations: England, Egypt and ‘The Holy Land’. Each destination had a number of historical and cultural associations with New Zealand, and each therefore offered the chance to encounter not only the ‘foreign’, but also the familiar.

The reactions of 2NZEF to the ‘tourist’ opportunities presented in these three different geographical contexts reveal much about the meaning of the New Zealand wartime travel ‘experience’. Reality experienced could not match reality imagined, and ultimately, their ‘tourist’ outlook became refracted inwards. Ironically perhaps, these tourists’ experiences suggest that while travel broadened their horizons, ultimately, it narrowed their outlook.
Acknowledgements

I would like to begin this rather long list of acknowledgements by thanking all of those who generously agreed to be interviewed for this thesis or to provide written recollections and observations. Many went beyond 'the call of duty' and were kind enough to allow me to borrow letters, diaries and photographs - I would like to thank them for their trust in me. My apologies go to those whose material I could not use, but I am extremely grateful for their offers.

I would also like to thank the staff and fellow students at the Department of History, University of Otago, with whom I discussed many aspects of this thesis. In particular, I wish to express my gratitude to Tony Ballantyne, Bill Keane and Aaron Fox who all generously shared with me ideas, information and sources uncovered in their own research. I would also like to express my thanks to Professor Lawrence Jones of the University's Department of English who provided valuable comments on New Zealand's war fiction, and to Dr. Margaret Barter whose own work provided my first introduction to 'social' military history. Her interest in my work and her comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

My research could not have been conducted without the assistance of the staff at the various institutions visited. I cannot acknowledge every person by name but I would like to thank the staff at the Hocken Library - and in particular David McDonald; the Alexander Turnbull Library; the Defence Library; the Auckland Institute and Museum Library; National Archives and the Queen Elizabeth II Army Memorial Museum. In particular, I am grateful to Angela Young and Windsor Jones at the QEI1 Army Memorial Museum for their assistance during my research visit to Waiouru. Here, I should also like to acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the History Department's Post-graduate Committee which enabled me to carry out research at Waiouru.

My time in Auckland would have been less productive without the help of Christine Wilson at the Auckland University Library, and for the generosity of Rhône-Poulenc New Zealand Limited and Heritage Mining NL in providing me with office space in which to write. I wish to thank Nigel Toft of Rhône-Poulenc and Peter Atkinson of Heritage Mining for allowing this to happen.

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Abbreviations

Libraries and Archives:
AIM Auckland Institute and Museum Library
AM Queen Elizabeth II Army Memorial Museum Waiouru
ATL Alexander Turnbull Library Wellington
DLW Defence Library Wellington
Hocken Hocken Library Dunedin
NA National Archives Wellington

Ranks:
Bdr. Bombardier
Capt. Captain
Cpl. Corporal
Gnr. Gunner
Lt. Lieutenant
Lt.-Col. Lieutenant-Colonel
Maj. Major
Maj.-Gen. Major-General
Pte. Private
S/- Staff (usually S/Sgt)
Sgt. Sergeant
Signmn. Signalman
Spr. Sapper
WO Warrant Officer

Unit Titles¹:
1AIF The First Australian Imperial Force
2AIF The Second Australian Imperial Force
NZASC New Zealand Army Service Corps
ERS 2NZEF Education and Rehabilitation Service
(MG) Machine gun
NZA New Zealand Divisional Artillery

¹ I have used the ‘2nd NZEF Authorised Abbreviated Titles for Formations, Units and Corps for use in New Zealand’ throughout my text. I would like to thank Aaron Fox for providing me with a copy of this list and for his helpful comments on nomenclature.
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<td>New Zealand Army Nursing Service</td>
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Introduction

‘NEW LANDS, NEW PLACES’

The war has brought New Zealanders to new lands, new places and situations. ...This generation of New Zealanders is certainly seeing the strange places of the world.¹

Figure 1 - Sid and R. McDougall at the sphynx and pyramid-temple, 1940. (R.A. McDougall Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ. F717791/2).

For most of the members of the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force (2NZEF), the Second World War involved, by necessity, long periods of service overseas. While only a relatively small proportion directly experienced combat, all had in common the experience of living and travelling abroad, of touring. Yet the notion of ‘the soldier as tourist’, until recently, has been overlooked by most historians when considering the way in which troops reacted to warfare. One of the few exceptions is Richard White, who has made the first steps towards analysing soldiers’ experiences within the context of tourism in general. Although he is concerned only with the actions and writings of Australian troops in the First World War, there is a considerable degree of similarity between their experiences and their counterparts in 2NZEF (and indeed those of ‘Bill Massey’s tourists’ of the First New Zealand Expeditionary Force - 1NZEF). Like the Australians in his study, the New Zealanders of the Second New Zealand Division (2(NZ) Division) also possessed a well-established tourist ethos and this influenced their reactions to battle. Indeed, these New Zealanders had in common with the members of the first Australian Imperial Force (1AIF) a strong tourist tradition, derived not only from geographical isolation, history and status as a wealthy migration-based society; but also a tourist spirit inherited from their predecessors in 1NZEF and the various Contingents sent to the Boer War. It should, of course, be conceded that ‘...soldiers cannot normally be regarded as tourists. They do not travel for the sake of what they see.’ They do, however, exhibit a range of behaviour and participate in a number of activities which, in general, conform to a ‘tourist’ model.

The term ‘tourist’ has, in its modern usage, acquired a number of negative connotations. A distinction is often drawn between the tourist and the ‘traveller’, to differentiate between what is perceived to be the superficial in contrast to the authentic. Yet these are imprecise, value-

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6 ibid., p.65.

laden concepts which, as James Buzard notes, have ‘...more to do with the society and culture that produce the tourist than [they do] ...with the encounter any given tourist or “traveller” may have with a foreign society or culture.’

Tourist’ is used in this present study to encompass both Fussell’s ‘travellers’ and Buzard’s ‘anti-tourists’, but it is not intended to be used in the same way as Dean MacCannell does, as a model for ‘...modern-man-in-general.’ At the risk of further adding to the multiplicity of its meanings and understandings, ‘tourist’ is also used here with reference to the military and, specifically, the military ‘tour’ of duty. Hence the soldiers of 2NZEF and in particular, 2(NZ) Division, are ‘tourists’ in both a civilian and a military sense. The potential value of adopting this approach has been outlined by White:

The tourist’s relationship to the host culture must by definition be that of the observer, never of the participant. Ultimately, the tourist’s loyalties and sympathies must, to paraphrase Edward Said, lie with the tourist’s own culture, not that of the host. If it were not, there would, in a sense, be nothing to observe. And this is the point of course: the limitations of the tourist’s vision is also its strength, because the tourist looks on from the outside, but always with something to compare, always able to see through the pretensions of a particular time and place.

There is another aspect of tourism which may be useful when analysing soldiers’ reactions to warfare. Being a tourist implies not only travelling abroad, but also the expectation of returning to the place of departure. As John Kennedy, a member of 4 Field Regiment put it: ‘For most of us it was a first journey overseas and all was new and exciting. One didn’t think of it as a one-way ticket - no return half guaranteed.’ The psychological benefits of adopting a tourist stance have also been touched on by Richard White, who argues that ‘...this precious detachment, the capacity to stand aside for a time, might have a been crucial respite in war.’ While White acknowledges that his is a speculative discussion of tourism in relation to soldiers, it is worthwhile applying the concept of ‘soldiers as tourists’ in order to examine soldiers’ experiences from a New Zealand perspective.

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8 James Buzard, The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to ‘Culture’ 1800-1918, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, p.5; also Jonathan Culler, ‘The Semiotics of Tourism’, in Jonathan Culler, Framing the Sign: Criticism and Its Institutions, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988, pp.153-167. Culler maintains that the traveller/tourist dichotomy has operated primarily ‘...to convince oneself that one is not a tourist. The desire to distinguish between tourists and real travellers is part of tourism - integral to it rather than outside it or beyond it’, p.156.


10 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.64.


12 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.71.

13 ibid., p.63.
The relationship between war and travel or tourism is not new. James Buzard, for example, has pointed out that '[e]ver since Napoleon criss-crossed Europe with an army, it has seemed natural to refer to armies or hordes of tourists invading the same territory.' Indeed, a number of authors, such as Robin Gerster, have perceived the "intimate relationship of the war narrative and the traveller's tale...", a relationship which Gerster argues has grown stronger in this century of 'world' wars. As Paul Fussell's study of British literary travelling in the inter-war period demonstrates:

The memorable war memoirs of the late 20's and early 30's...are very like travel books.... They are ironic or parodic or nightmare travels, to France and Belgium, with the Channel ferries and forty-and-eights replacing the liners and chic trains of real travel.... Curiously, at the end of the Second World War the war book has something of the same "travel" element attached to it, the same obsession with topography and the mystery of place....

Furthermore, as Gerster suggests, the correlation of war service with the travel experience is also encoded in such expressions as 'expeditionary forces', and later, 'tours of duty'. Significantly, in light of these comments, New Zealand soldiers (whose badge motto, coincidentally, was 'Onwards'), like their counterparts in Australia, are known as 'returned soldiers', rather than 'veterans' or 'ex-servicemen'. The implication being, as White maintains, that '[t]hey had been somewhere.'

While much of this is, of course, coincidental, it does assume a greater meaning when placed in the context of New Zealand's military history. Foreign travel has been an integral part of the New Zealand experience of war this century; although this sort of travel has tended to be seen by most observers (though not always by the participants themselves) as "...peripheral, incidental to the primary experience of battle." Indeed, as early as 1899, one member of New Zealand's Legislative Council was decrying the "...loafers and larrikins who are only too glad to embrace the opportunity of getting a trip to South Africa at the public expense." Yet 'new lands' and 'new places' have been central to the way in which many New Zealanders remember war. For New Zealanders, from the Boer War onwards, to borrow Gertser's explanation of

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14 Buzard, p.321.
15 Gerster, pp.191-192.
17 Gerster, p.192.
18 White, 'Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist', p.139. This is not to deny that 'veterans' and 'ex-servicemen' had not 'been somewhere', but the term is suggestive of the emphasis which New Zealand (and Australian) society placed on the role of European travel (in any form) as a marker of status. See ibid.
19 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.63.
Australian motives: ‘...something more than mere colonial loyalty, something “larger” in the mythical sense, propelled the diggers to these foreign fields.’ For many New Zealanders, this ‘something’ included the opportunity for foreign travel, an opportunity which remained highly valued in New Zealand society.

For Hugh Ross, serving with the New Zealand Mounted Rifles in South Africa during the Boer War, travel added a dimension of unreality to his war experience. ‘None of us can realise we are in Africa...’ he wrote, ‘...I still think of home being just across the street.’ For Ross, and for many others, this unexpected opportunity to see new lands and new places meant that he was determined to be impressed in spite of, what were often, poor first impressions. Arriving in Capetown, for example, he wrote:

...the niggers [sic] are real niggers, Coal Black. I never saw niggers before, they are the “Real Mackay” [sic]. The town doesn’t appear very interesting, but of course we haven’t been on shore.

On other occasions, New Zealanders would take ‘French Leave’ (absent themselves without leave) in order to see the towns and sights of Australia and South Africa properly and, as the official history of New Zealand’s involvement in this conflict observed, one of the impressions the New Zealanders brought home with them was an ‘...admiration for the beauty of the South African uplands,...’ Hence, for many New Zealand soldiers, the Boer War provided not only a chance to demonstrate loyalty to the empire but also a chance to see something of the outside world. As Ross recorded in his diary: ‘Just fancy it was 3 weeks yesterday since we left Old Marton, by jingo we have seen and learnt a lot since then.’

Travel was even more of an acknowledged part of the New Zealanders’ experiences of World War One. In Ormond Burton’s first chapter of The Silent Division, entitled somewhat significantly ‘Of How we commenced to go About the world and up and down it’, he wrote that ‘[a] great adventure was opening up.’

22 Hugh Ross, diary, 20 November 1899, MS Papers 1436, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. [Henceforth ATL].
23 ibid., 23 November 1899. [My emphasis].
25 Hugh Ross, diary, 10 November 1899, MS Papers 1436, ATL.
Most of us, like Sir Francis Drake and Mr Phileas Fogg, went round the world. We took on average about the same time as the former, but proceeded rather more in the manner of the latter. On transports of every kind ...we peregrinated up and down and round about on the most marvellous of all the grand tours.27

As Burton’s comments suggest, many New Zealand soldiers shared with their counterparts in 1AIF an experience of World War One which was largely characterised by the images and metaphors of travel.28 The members of 1NZEF described themselves as ‘Bill Massey’s tourists’ or ‘five-bob-a-day tourists from down under’, a description which was given additional significance in their eyes by the long sea voyage they undertook on board some of the great passenger liners of the day.29 Like 1AIF, they left with the same rituals as tourists and sailed on the same liners. They celebrated as they crossed the equator and made the same ports of call as ‘ordinary’ tourists.30 Indeed, for 1NZEF, as Richard White argues of 1AIF: ‘Their immediate destination was a tourist’s one: either Egypt ...or England ...[and] they were trained within sights of two archetypal tourist monuments, the pyramids of Giza or Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain.’31 Furthermore, the New Zealanders and Australians spent their leave in tourist destinations such as London, Paris and Cairo, all of which added to the illusion of tourism.

This illusion was maintained, somewhat unconsciously, after World War One. As Jock Phillips has noted of New Zealand’s memorials to World War One:

…it is remarkable how often the names of the countries or battle sites where New Zealanders fought appear on memorials. Gallipoli and Messines, Egypt and France, are inscribed in stone, and the Maori memorial in Wanganui once held containers of soil from the sacred spots. This was partly to recall the places where men died but it was also to record those occasions when New Zealanders had been noticed in the great world overseas.32

27 ibid., p.3.
28 Gerster, p.193.
30 White, ‘The Soldier as Tourist’, p.67; White, ‘Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist’, p.125. See also Tiki Talk. [Souvenir magazine of 23rd NZ Reinforcements, 1NZEF]. Tiki Talk has short articles on ‘Crossing the Line’ [pp.31-32], ‘Cape Town’ [which is described as ‘...full of interest for the sightseer...’], p.17], ‘A Tramp Abroad’ [p.19] and ‘Seeing it Some’ [which offers a description of how to make the most of sightseeing while drunk, pp.41-42].
Thus, while in New Zealand (as in Australia), these memorials tended to celebrate sacrifice rather than tourism, expressing as they did, a combination of local pride and sorrow, they also listed some of the places where those same locals had been: a type of memorial not only to sacrifice, but also to travel, where the itinerary was inscribed in stone. 33

The members of 2(NZ) Division, ‘Freyberg’s travelling 2/7 a day tourists...’ 34 inherited this tourist tradition from their predecessors, and like 1AIF, they too would undergo virtually identical ‘tourist’ rites and rituals. Indeed, they would also experience war through the lens of tourism and almost all would be tourists at some point. 35 For the majority, Pat Kane’s remarks would provide an appropriate summary of their ‘tourist’ experience:

It was unfortunate that it should be a war which gave me the opportunity to travel overseas. Nevertheless I am thankful that I did get the opportunity of visiting so many countries and mixing in a way which would have been impossible under normal conditions. 36

As Kane’s comments suggest, their tour was not undertaken under ‘normal’ conditions and therefore, a number of corollaries should be kept in mind throughout.

While this particular form of tourism was probably New Zealand’s most democratic up to that point, in that the social range of the men who went was a reasonable reflection of male society as a whole, it was virtually a gender exclusive form of travel. 37 The reactions and experiences of the comparatively few New Zealand women who also served abroad in this period has been sadly neglected and merits a study of its own. 38 The accounts of two members

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33 White, ‘Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist’, p.138; Maureen Sharpe, ‘Anzac Day in New Zealand 1916-1939’, New Zealand Journal of History, 15, 2 (October 1981), pp.97-114. [Henceforth NZJH]. Although, admittedly, the ‘itinerary’ is far from complete. One would be hard pressed, one suspects, to find the names of the camps overseas, such as Sling Camp or, indeed, the ports of Australia or India included among the familiar names of Gallipoli or the Somme.

34 P.M. Aylett to family, 20 November 1940, MS Papers 1603. ATL.

35 That the soldiers were all tourists at some point is an observation originally made of 1AIF by White. See White, ‘Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist’, p.125.


38 For the numbers of women who served with 2NZEF in the Middle East see ‘Appendix 1’, T. Duncan M.Stout, New Zealand Medical Services in the Middle East and Italy, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1956, p.694; W.G. Stevens, Problems of 2NZEF, Wellington: War History
of the New Zealand Army Nursing Service (NZANS) and one member of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) are contained within this study and while these cannot form the basis of any meaningful conclusions, these women do appear to have also shared in this ‘tourist’ outlook. Likewise, Maori reactions to the ‘new lands’ and ‘new places’ encountered through war would provide an interesting comparative study. Given that Maori remained a volunteer force for the duration of the war, one could speculate that travel was even more of an incentive to these soldier-tourists. John McLeod, for example, writes:

Obviously, besides the attitude of tribal elders, there were many other factors that encouraged the Maori to enlist. They were as susceptible as pakehas [sic] to the lure of adventure and travel in foreign lands, and some even felt a patriotism: “We had all been pretty well indoctrinated about the Empire - it was a big strong thing then.”

Wherever possible, an attempt has been made to analyse any differing responses by Maori, but it has been assumed, where there is a lack of evidence to the contrary, that Maori and pakeha shared a predominant response. Also, much of the evidence provided has been obtained from written sources. There is an obvious bias here, as writing letters and keeping diaries favours the more literate (and perhaps the more motivated), but by 1939 New Zealand was a literate society. Indeed, as the authors of The Great Adventure have noted of 1NZEF: ‘The number of diaries and letters is not surprising. The early part of this century was a literate age. ...When they left for war, many New Zealand men believed that they were embarking on ‘the great adventure’ of their lives, and so they determined to record it in either diary or letter.


39 See for example, Joyce Macdonald, Away from Home: The Story of a Nursing Sister in the Middle East, Christchurch: The Bookroom, 1945. This is not to say that their ‘tourist’ experiences were in any way trivial or less meaningful than those of the men. Indeed, these women were also faced with the very real horrors of modern war and in at least one case, that of Neva Clarke McKenna (née Morrison) who was raped by three Palestinians, their experiences were as traumatic as those of many front-line soldiers. See Neva Clarke McKenna, Angel in God’s office: My wartime diaries, North Shore City (NZ): Tandem Press, 1996, esp. Ch. 10, pp.44-48.

form....' 41 These comments are also pertinent to 2NZEF. Finally, there are differences between individuals. These individual differences are obviously too numerous to be covered in this (or perhaps any) work, but as Roslyn Pesman Cooper has suggested of Australian tourists in Naples:

The tourists arrived at their destination with images and expectations that structured perception, opinion and reporting. Operating on ways of seeing and reacting were individual differences in education, interests, sensory abilities, temperament and context so that the reactions of the Australians were not uniform, but a repertoire of dominant responses does emerge. 42

While not discounting the qualifications above, this present study attempts to survey the 'repertoire of dominant responses' of the soldier-tourists of 2(NZ) Division. They, as this study suggests, were 'no ordinary tourists'. Their tourism was undertaken during wartime and this could, and did, take them to places where the local population were indifferent to their presence at best, or openly hostile at worst (although more cynical observers might claim that this is, in fact, the essence of the modern tourist's 'experience'). Given that they travelled as a sizeable group, sharing a common culture and language, there was, on the face of it, no need for them to have any but the briefest of contact with, or interest in, the 'locals'. Indeed, the Division had its own newspaper, cinemas, cooks, concert party, police, padres, transport, doctors, dentists and even showers. What is significant, therefore, is that so many of the New Zealanders consciously and unconsciously adopted the role of tourists.

Certainly, as their writings suggest, a number were aware of the unexpected opportunity to see the 'new lands' and 'new places' that this war offered, and this also figured somewhere in the decision of many to volunteer or to accept conscription. More than this, however, travel was thought to offer educational and acculturating opportunities, to 'broaden one's horizons', both figuratively and literally. Travel could, therefore, be an educational experience, particularly for those geographically so far removed from the 'traditional' sources of culture and learning. But for these, who were 'no ordinary tourists', the 'lesson' learnt from their tourism would prove to be an intensely parochial one.

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Chapter One

EMBARKING ON A ‘WONDERFUL TRIP’

Looking back it is hard to believe that we have been away from New Zealand for just over 12 months, as we have seen many strange and novel sights during that period. ...Actually it has, so far, been a wonderful trip and an education to the great majority of us who had not previously been out of New Zealand.1

Figure 2 - ‘New Zealand troops sailing probably from Wellington wharf.’ [ca. 1941]. (Unknown. War History Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ. G1238271/2).

1 Cpl. R.T. Bishop, Diary, 10 January 1941, Accession 9201076/2, Queen Elizabeth II Army Memorial Museum, Waipouli. [Henceforth AM].
On 2 September 1939, the Oversea Passengers Emergency Regulations were issued preventing any person sixteen years of age or over from leaving New Zealand for overseas without a written permit from the Minister or the Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs. The main exceptions to these restrictions were members of His Majesty's Armed Forces. Thus, private travel abroad effectively ceased for all New Zealanders for the duration of the war. For those New Zealanders of 2(NZ) Division, war would offer two profound, overlapping experiences. The first was the horrific experience of modern warfare, while the second was that of travel abroad, "...a peculiarly military variety of "tourism", but tourism nonetheless."

As the comments above by 18 Battalion member R.T. Bishop suggest, for many New Zealand soldiers, the experience of war was largely characterised by the images and metaphors of travel. Either consciously or unconsciously, the soldiers themselves began to exhibit a range of behaviour usually associated with the 'ordinary' tourists of peacetime. From the outset, even at the wharves as they left, 2(NZ) Division's war began to assume the outward appearance of a 'wonderful trip', an impression which appears to have received encouragement from the army itself. Some, however, needed no encouragement. For a few, a desire to see the world was their primary motive in volunteering or accepting conscription, while for a greater proportion, the opportunity of travel abroad was probably a much more significant motive than is often recognised. It is, of course, difficult to comment upon the motivation behind New Zealanders' decisions to enlist in the Army at the start of World War Two, these being the acts of individuals based upon their own personal beliefs and circumstances. The question of motivation for enlisting would also appear to be made redundant by the introduction of conscription on 18 June 1940. Indeed, the introduction of conscription has made the motivation of those who decided not to go to war of more interest to some historians. The fact was, however, that without the national will, conscription could not have produced New Zealanders' responses to the war.

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3 These two experiences were ones which they shared with their Anzac predecessors. See White, 'Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist', p.122.
4 This was a trait which they shared with 1AIF. See Gerster, 'Occidental tourists', p.193.
5 These are comments which were originally applied to 1AIF. White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.65.
Zealand’s war effort. It is, nonetheless, possible that a desire to see the world played an important role in New Zealanders’ attitudes towards enlistment and also their acceptance of conscription. As one returned soldier admitted:

I was one of 14 of a family working in the Denniston Coal Mine when war was declared - to me this was an opportunity to see the world and travel, which I could not have done in civilian life.  

Just as troops in 1NZEF had seen the First World War as the ‘Great Adventure’, the ‘opportunity to see the world’ was now being made available to many in society for whom overseas travel was impossible or at best, highly unlikely. As John Kennedy, a gunner with 4 Field Regiment, later recalled:

I think the sense of adventure was paramount among those who volunteered or were conscripted to go overseas. Nowadays it seems fashionable to attribute high flown motives such as a “just cause” etc. Such motives were there admittedly but they were secondary. For most of us it was a first journey overseas and all was new and exciting. 

The Second World War had an impact on the ‘opportunity structure’ of many in marginalised positions in New Zealand society. In World War One Antipodean society ‘...[s]uddenly the experience of Europe was being offered to all those who fitted the army’s requirements - age, height, chest measurement and, of course, sex’, an offer which was repeated a generation later. Of the 138,000 New Zealanders who served in the Army in the Second World War, 59,644 were volunteers. This, of course, does not include those who were too young to have volunteered before conscription was introduced, nor does it include those with commitments which prevented them from volunteering. Even so, as Ian Wards has

9 Unacknowledged respondent cited in McLeod, p.20.
11 J.W.A. Kennedy, letter to author, 30 June 95.
12 Richard White, ‘Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist’, p.124. White notes that ‘...the pre-war [World War One] social exclusiveness of travel became after 1914 a gender exclusiveness, with the exception of the (relatively few) Australian nurses’, p.124. This is also largely true of New Zealand’s World War Two experience.
13 McLeod, p.18.
pointed out, the number of volunteers, '...in the context of the “phony war” and the introduction of conscription as early as June 1940, does not spell out too much reluctance'.14

One should be careful not to overstate the extent to which travel was a motivating factor in the decision to go to war. There were a myriad of reasons. New Zealand maintained strong cultural, political and economic ties with Britain. These ties were carefully maintained and nurtured throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, decades which were the formative years for the members of 2NZEF.15 Inculcated with a set of ideas about New Zealand's relationship with Britain and its empire, and the rights and, more importantly, the responsibilities this relationship entailed, a number felt as Warwick Anderson did, that they were '...a product of my era.'16 The Prime Minister of the day, Michael Joseph Savage, expressed the feelings of many at the time: 'Both with gratitude for the past, and with confidence in the future, we range ourselves without fear beside Britain. Where she goes, we go, where she stands, we stand.'17

This is not to suggest that New Zealanders were motivated by blind obedience to some ethereal notion of 'empire'. 'They used the term “empire” a lot and you did feel part of that [but] ...I was a New Zealander first and foremost and I belonged to the New Zealand Division.'18 Despite a growing awareness and assertion of national identity, a large majority of New Zealanders still regarded Britain as 'home'. Consequently, as David Atwool noted, '[t]he distant war now became a “real” war for the defence of a traditional homeland and centre of government.'19 The call of King and of country was still strong.

14 Wards, p.29. Wards also notes that the number of volunteers is for the Army only, and excludes those who volunteered for the Navy and Air Force.
16 Warwick Anderson, interview, Mosgiel 7 April 1995.
18 Warwick Anderson, interview, Mosgiel 7 April 1995. [His emphasis].
Some fought on principle. Initially the New Zealand press portrayed two distinct types of Germans, an arbitrary group known as 'the German people', and their (and potentially New Zealand's) oppressors, the Nazis. While this distinction would disappear, for a number of New Zealanders it was the Nazis who were their true opponents. Angus Ross was in perhaps a unique position when he made his decision to enlist in early 1940. A student of history and international affairs at the University of Otago, he had studied and researched dictatorships as part of his degree. His study led him to conceive '...a distinct hatred of the Nazi regime of Hitler. ...From then on [he] ...would be very anti-fascist.' He was not alone in his feelings; many believed that their principles were worth fighting for. The NZEF Times echoed such beliefs. In a 1941 article entitled 'Fighting the Hun', (already the distinction of 'good' and 'bad' Germans had been replaced by one more familiar to a generation of New Zealanders), it asked 'Why are we New Zealanders so many thousands of miles away from home? What ARE we fighting for?' The answer was that it was matter of principle.

The German has definitely made up his mind that the rest of the world should accept the Nazi way of living ...we have to fight for our right to live the way we want to live.... In Germany a man cannot criticise the government, cannot organise a Trades Union as we know it, cannot have freedom of expression from the pulpit. If we British people do not desire to live the way the Hun determines for us, then we must fight the Hun. That is why New Zealanders are fighting.

The magazine of the 3 General Hospital was more succinct: 'We are fighting ...for the preservation of human rights and values - for democracy.'

Not all joined on the basis of moral principles or patriotism. As John McLeod has pointed out, the decision of men to enlist was more a reflection of their personal circumstances and background than any of the above. The epithet 'debt-dodgers', 'wife-beaters' or 'economic conscripts' was sometimes applied to the soldiers, especially those of the first three echelons. There were undoubtedly a few men who, like Francis Jackson's 'D'Arcy', joined up in order to escape domestic responsibilities. The charge of 'economic conscripts' still awaits serious investigation but anecdotal evidence suggests that there was a proportion of the men who found that what the Army was offering (pay, keep and clothing) compared favourably with what was on offer in private employment. Indeed, as Nan Taylor has pointed out:

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20 ibid., p.13.
21 Professor Angus Ross, interview, Dunedin 6 April 1995.
22 NZEF Times, 1, 4, Monday July 21, 1941, p.4. [Emphasis in the original].
23 ibid., p.4.
24 Hospitiki, 3, 1943, p.46. [Defence Library, Wellington. Henceforth, DLW].
25 McLeod, p.20.
26 Francis Jackson, Passage to Tobruk: The Diary of a Kiwi in the Middle East. Wellington: A.H. & A.W.
27 McLeod, p.24.
...the war closely followed the Depression. In October 1933, there were 79,500 men unemployed or on subsidised work. In September 1939 there were still 19,000; 2000 in December 1942...."28 Some work has been done on 2AIF but the extent to which those findings are mirrored in 2NZEF remains, for the meantime, unknown.29

Some men entered the army to escape uninteresting occupations, dull towns or domestic difficulties, or because of peer or family pressure. For others, a belief in equality of sacrifice and membership in the tradition of 1NZEF were equally powerful motives. The proximity in time of World War One meant that there were many recruits who had relations who had served in 1NZEF and, as in Australia (with 1AIF and 2AIF), concerted efforts were made to engender a sense of communion between the two.30 Early recruiting posters played on this theme, one, for example, proclaiming ‘The “Spirit of Anzac” CALLS YOU’,31 while another appealed to those with the ‘...blood and traditions...’ of their fathers.32 The magazine of the 7th Reinforcements, the Aquitatler declared:

Twenty-six years ago our fathers crossed these same waters resolved to put an end to tyranny and war. ...The spectre of war has again raised its head among nations [and] ...a new generation of Anzacs has stepped forward to answer the call.33

There were other social pressures, some of which could induce whole rugby teams to enlist en masse.34 ‘I am not a warlike man; I didn’t really want to shoot anyone...’ wrote ‘Shorty’ Lovegrove, a sergeant with the Divisional Cavalry, of his reasons for enlisting. ‘I just wanted to be accepted like other men. ...One just had to be part of it. Not to be in uniform invited a critical hostility in fact.’35 As Lt. Col. John Snadden (formerly second-in-command of 5 Field Regiment) recalled:

30 ibid., p.14.
32 Aquitatler, Seventh Reinforcements, At Sea, October 1941, p.1. [DLW]. See also ‘Sons of the ANZACS’, WA II, Series 1, DA 426/65, NA.
33 McLeod, p.21. See also, Kuru Waaka interview, New Zealand at War, Part 1, ‘O What a Lovely War’.
Subtly we were indoctrinated into soldiering, it was pounded into us by the reminiscences of old soldiers, by the *Boys' Own Annual* and *Chums* (our usual Christmas gifts) and by the often present compulsory territorial soldiers who paraded weekly down at the drill hall. Every year as scouts we lined up for the Anzac Day parade and every 11th November we observed our two minutes' silence in company with the rest of the country. We didn't know much about what it was about except that we were expected to conform.36

A belief in egalitarianism, to which many New Zealanders subscribed, meant there was general feeling that everyone should do 'their share', (a belief, which some have argued would later lead to the 'Furlough Mutiny').37 This was portrayed in one recruiting poster which pictured a soldier asking the reader, 'Are YOU going to leave it all to me? When a fellow New Zealander asks you to lend a hand you won't turn him down?'38 Finally, for a nonchalant few, the decision was based upon chance. Francis Jackson '...flicked a penny - the army or not.'39 All of these were factors in motivating New Zealanders to volunteer and to accept conscription.

The opportunity to travel could have also been a factor in a would-be soldier's decision, and is the one factor that is rarely emphasised in official or academic accounts of the war. With hindsight it is difficult, given the risks involved, as White points out '...to imagine that anyone would go to war to see the world.'40 The crucial word here is 'hindsight'. While New Zealanders' perceptions of war would have undoubtedly been affected by the experiences of their predecessors in 1NZEF, their perception of the risks involved and the desire to go would have equally been different from those of later generations.41 Indeed, for some such as the corporal mentioned in Jim Eder's *Khaki Recollections*, war was a calculated risk.

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38 *Otago Daily Times*, Tuesday March 12 1940, p.8. [Emphasis in the original].
39 Jackson, p.10.
40 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.66.
41 ibid.
During shore leave in Colombo, he, and two friends got rather merry in one of the bars. He told us that he was only in the Army to get a free trip to other parts of the world. He told us to watch him and remember what he said; that as soon as he had seen all the sights of Egypt and Palestine he would be on a Hospital Ship bound for home. ...The first week he went up the Nile to Memphis and other places of interest there. On his second week he went to Alexandria and on to Palestine. About a week after he returned to the Unit from Palestine he tripped on a tent rope in the dark and fell down. He said he couldn't get up and was in agony with pain in his back. ...[Later] we heard that he had been medically 'Boarded' and was going home on the next trip of our Hospital Ship.\textsuperscript{42}

Paul Fussell has made the study of these differences in the perception of war his own, noting that our understanding of the First World War is derived from 'modern memory' rather than contemporary experience, and that even in the Second World War, 'the real war will never get in the books.'\textsuperscript{43} Kai Jensen has found a similar theme in his study of New Zealand World War Two fiction: "...war experience [is] ...a secret knowledge, something which can't be talked about with anyone save other initiates."\textsuperscript{44} It would appear from both Fussell's and Jensen's work that only veterans and troops who were there could know what it was like: 'red-arses' (newly arrived reinforcements), those still training at home, would-be recruits and civilians could not.\textsuperscript{45} While this serves only to establish that the reasons for volunteering or accepting military service were as diverse as the individuals concerned, and that the desire to travel and see the world may have been a hitherto overlooked factor in their decisions, there is one point at which all of the members of 2(NZ) Division conformed to the tourist tradition; and that is that they all undertook a leisurely sea voyage.\textsuperscript{46} The importance with which the troops viewed this act, as John Vader points out, can be seen in the fact that it features in almost every official account of individual units.

The Anzacs' sense of adventure, the excitement in sailing away to the wars belongs to their war history: the actual sailing is described somewhere in practically every official account of individual battalions or divisions. The Voyage: the names of the ships, the escort, ports of call, who went on leave, games on board ...the ones who rejoined after being left at Durban or Colombo, ...the good time that was had by 'one and all'.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{44} Kai Jensen, Talk 1, 'A Very Readable War', p.6. [Transcript of Radio series, Kai Jensen, 'A Very Readable War', Concert FM, Thursday 5 November 1992. I would like to thank Professor Lawrence Jones of the Department of English, University of Otago for providing me with a copy of his transcript].
\textsuperscript{45} White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.66.
\textsuperscript{46} White makes this point about IAIIF, ibid., p.67.
'The Voyage' figures prominently in many of the diaries, letters and memoirs of the Division's members. Reuben Jones of 22 Battalion wrote, '[t]he boat we sailed on was one of the largest luxury liners of the world...', while in Soldier Country, Jim Henderson describes the journey to the Wellington wharf '...where our big transport, a peacetime luxury liner, lay alongside awaiting us. Two hours later we were alongside her, looking up in awe at her immense sides....'48 Most of the troopships were passenger liners leased from some of the leading companies of the day. 'I am on board the former P&O liner "Orion", Gee, she is a real luxury ship...', enthused 18 Battalion member, John Westbrook. 'The boats are the "Orion", ...the "Strathaird", "Empress of Canada" and the "Rangitane".... You can see that the troops are having a luxury trip.'49 In the early stages of the war many of these liners had not yet been converted for their military purpose, enabling some on board to enjoy a standard of shipboard life not dissimilar to that enjoyed by the civilian tourists who had previously occupied the berths and cabins.

Since no structural alterations had been made to their luxury liner, the men were well pleased with conditions on board the Andes.... With the exception of 214 men for whom hammocks were supplied, all soldiers found themselves in cabins with private bathrooms. Swimming baths, excellent dining-rooms, wide deck space for training and recreation, wet and dry canteens where cigarettes, beer and spirits sold for approximately half the usual New Zealand prices, and friendly sailors - all these made for happy voyaging and good morale.50

Officers especially were given comfortable accommodation, a practice not lost on many of the men and a few of the officers. The Twentieth Battalion's official history, for example, recorded that '[o]fficers, warrant officers, and sergeants messed in dining-rooms in peacetime comfort, attended by Indian waiters clad in a picturesque uniform of flowing blue coat over a spotless white gown, complete with a broad waist-sash and corded blue-and-white turban.'51 Indeed, Sir Howard Kippenberger would later recall:

The Dunera [the first transport to leave New Zealand] ...was a regular troopship of 11,000 tons. In the old style, the officers had ample accommodation (mine was luxurious) and more than enough deck space, while the men were crowded in the holds. The other ships were passenger liners not yet converted for troopng and later the Twentieth [Battalion on board the Dunera ] ...read with disgust of its luxury voyage to Egypt.52

49 J.E.J. Westbrook to family, 5 January 1940, pp.1-3, MS Papers 1407, folder 1, ATL.
50 Angus Ross, 23 Battalion, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1959, p.10.
Conditions on board troopships varied, with later reinforcement drafts in particular suffering from overcrowding and unhygienic conditions which few, if any, civilian tourists would endure or be forced to endure. The 13th Reinforcements, for example, were due to sail from Wellington onboard the Dunnotar Castle in late September, 1944. Because of overcrowding and the general state of the vessel, a large number of the troops on board ‘...broke through the wharf gates, and led by sailors with a piper playing, marched to Parliament...’ to air their grievances.\(^{53}\) Conditions on earlier convoys could also be poor, the Ormonde especially gaining a degree of notoriety in 1940. Here overcrowding, unsanitary conditions and maggot-infested meat, coupled with particularly insensitive handling of the matter by the Bombay port authorities combined to create a near mutiny by some New Zealand troops.\(^{54}\) Therefore, while Richard White is correct in alluding to the similarities between pre-war Australasian tourism and soldier-tourism in terms of both distance and mode of travel, conditions on board troopships were often not of a tourist standard.

But tourism involves more than simply the physical act of travel. There are rituals and modes of behaviour which are peculiar to the tourist, and in many vital respects, these were shared by soldiers. The members of 2(NZ) Division who sailed for Egypt and later Italy, left amidst the same sorts of farewell ceremonies as those given to the passenger liners in earlier pre-war days. The streamer throwing, gift-giving and band-playing which White describes in his account of the embarkation of 1AIF were also present at the departure of 2NZEF.\(^{55}\)

About 9 a.m. the gates of the wharf were thrown open and the people rushed along the wharf in their thousands, eagerly scanning the ship to spot their friends while those on board scanned the wharf no less eagerly. The whole scene was a most colourful one for many had brought streamers and coloured scarves etc. \(^{56}\)

The departure of 23 Battalion and other elements of 2NZEF also occurred amid similar scenes - engendered also, one suspects, by the likely length of time the soldiers would be away as well as the potential risks they faced.

Ten minutes before departure time, the gates were opened and friends and relations rushed to the ship’s side to take a last farewell. Streamers were thrown from the wharf to the soldiers leaning over rails of the Andes. They [the streamers] broke as the ship moved out into stream. That was the signal for the exchange of round after round of cheering between the thousands on the wharf and the departing soldiers [and] ...Lyttleton harbour rang with the noise.\(^{57}\)

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56 J.W.A. Kennedy to family, 15 September 1941, MS Papers 1449, folder 1. ATL.
57 Ross, 23 Battalion, p.10.
The time and money required to travel and tour ensured that it was the preserve of a small elite in Antipodean society.\textsuperscript{58} Given the proximity of the Great Depression, it is probable that only a select few within the ranks of 2(NZ) Division had travelled beyond New Zealand or Australia, let alone to Europe or the Middle East. It is therefore likely that many members of the Division would have also been novices to sea travel of this duration. Francis Jackson in \textit{Passage to Tobruk} recounted his first day on board a troopship. Neither he nor his companion ‘Mac’ had been to sea (except for an occasional trip on the Wellington to Christchurch steamer) and Jackson found the experience unforgettable.

As a rule I do not rave about sunsets, but seeing the blood-red, orange and yellow gorgeousness of this natural phenomenon for the first time at sea, I felt like a city boy marvelling at the everyday things he sees on his initial visit to the country.\textsuperscript{59}

Likewise, E.S. Hicks recalled, ‘[l]eaving the old land is one thing I shall never forget [and as] ...this was the first time I had ever been on the water [u] all seemed so strange...’\textsuperscript{60} Despite this lack of experience New Zealand soldiers, either consciously or unconsciously, began to assume the role of tourists.

The first port of call for the majority of the Division (as was the case for their predecessors) was Australia. Of all the countries visited on their ‘tour’, Australia was probably the most similar to New Zealand. Faced with a long voyage in which to imbue a tourist spirit, and possessing a tradition, inherited from their predecessors, that encouraged them to see it that way, Australia provided the New Zealanders with the opportunity to demonstrate their burgeoning tourist identity.\textsuperscript{61} Their arrival in Fremantle or Sydney was eagerly anticipated. Francis Jackson and his fellow travellers ‘...lined the rails early in the bright morning to catch our first real glimpse of Australia.’\textsuperscript{62} For those unaccustomed to sea travel, dry land provided a source of relief from the constant motion on board the troop ships; for most, however, leave in Fremantle or Perth provided an opportunity for sightseeing, socialising and shopping - for touring. It was an opportunity provided to all of New Zealand’s wartime ‘tourists’, irrespective of gender. Neva Morrison, a member of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps, for example, complained that socialising was interfering with sightseeing.

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\textsuperscript{58} White, ‘Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist’, p.123. See also Vader, p.50.

\textsuperscript{59} Jackson, p.14.

\textsuperscript{60} E.S. Hicks, ‘The History of a Soldier’s Life in the Army from 1941 until the end’, Unpublished Manuscript, MS Papers 1442, folder 1, ATL.

\textsuperscript{61} These are factors which also encouraged a similar identification with tourists among 1AIF, White, ‘The Soldier as Tourist’, p.67.

\textsuperscript{62} Jackson, p.18.
Peter asked me to a party-cum-dance in either Fremantle or Perth, when we get there..... Think I'd prefer to be with the girls, so I can shriek about the place a bit, as Peter's rather quiet, and I might miss seeing the place properly.63

Some were initially disappointed at the disjunction between the imagined and the real Australia. 'From the deck...,' wrote one soldier, '...Fremantle was not a very impressive place. Rather like Wanganui in some respects, only the waters of the Swan River were cleaner than those of the Wanganui River.'64 For others, experience soon overcame any negative first impressions.

The day we steamed into Fremantle was a perfect day and was somewhat disappointed with my first sight of Australia, it being very flat looking but changed my opinion after having leave in Fremantle and Perth.65

Transportation from Fremantle to Perth was provided free of charge to the soldiers, and most of them availed themselves of the opportunity to visit Perth. 'There were New Zealand soldiers everywhere...', wrote Francis Jackson, '...poking their noses into shops, or buying cigarettes from the pretty girl who served behind the tobacco counter at Woolworth's. Some strolled down footpaths in twos and threes, eating large handfuls of grapes from paper bags.'66 George Withers '...went straight to Perth. Had a good feed first thing then purchased curios to send home. Then had a look round the streets.'67 Granted leave the next day, he went to the zoo (where else to see the 'real' Australia) and finally to Kings Park which overlooked Perth in order to get a '...good view of Perth.'68 The zoo was a popular place to visit, not only for its exhibits, but because it was itself an exhibit, and a type of souvenir. After all, as Neva Morrison observed: '...everyone who visits Perth must go to the zoo, or no-one believes you've been to that city.'69 For others, Sydney was the first port of call on their 'tour'. '[W]e could see Sydney Heads quite clearly...,' wrote Roderick Fell, '...which was a great thrill for me as it was my first sight of a foreign country, so to speak.'70 Like their compatriots in Perth, the New Zealand soldiers in Sydney also exhibited 'tourist' pretensions. 'Did the usual

63 Neva Y. Morrison, Diary, Thursday 6 April 1944, MS Papers 3829, folder 1, ATL. [My emphasis].
64 Lt. R.L. Kay, 'The Voyage from NZ to Egypt 27 Aug. - 28 Oct. 1940', p.7, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/2, NA.
65 G.F. Withers, Diary, July 23 [1943]. [Diary lent to author, original in possession of Mr G.F. Withers, Gore. Copy deposited with the Hocken Library, Dunedin].
66 Jackson, p.19.
67 Withers, Diary, August 2 [1943].
68 ibid., Tuesday August 3 [1943].
69 Morrison, Diary, Sunday 9 April 1944, MS Papers 3829, folder 1, ATL. [Emphasis in the original].
70 Roderick B. Fell to his mother, 1 May 1940, p.5, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
things...’ wrote Sergeant Lovegrove, ‘...swim at Bondi, Taronga Park Zoo, ferry from Circular Quay all around the harbour.’

Not all New Zealand soldiers were interested in sightseeing or buying curios. For some men, the bars and brothels of Australia held more appeal. ‘Incredible as it may seem after the series of lectures given by the MOs [Medical Officers’], recorded the diary of one of 26 Battalion’s officers, ‘...the first place in Perth rushed by the troops was the brothel area. There were queues 5 deep down the sides of the brothels and out into the road.’ Some soldiers engaged in sexual activity while on leave, with Perth’s Roe and Shaw Streets, in particular, gaining some notoriety. ‘As we approached the Perth station we had a glimpse of Roe Street...’, wrote one New Zealander, ‘...with women in kimonas [sic] and not much more standing in inviting attitudes in the doors of the brothels’, while another described Shaw Street: ‘We pass famous Shaw Street, and boys get a shock of girls standing outside houses holding up and waving scanties, Bra’s [sic] etc. - in fact that is all some of the girls had on. Some of the boys go along and visit the street.’ In Sydney, too, the ‘tourists’ of 2(NZ) Division were met by ‘...great crowds of Aussies - women mainly - [who] formed up outside the gates. Many had placards “Ask for Mary - phone 486752”. ...We spent 5 days in Sydney. The first day was Christmas Day. We were given 2 condoms each as we walked off the gangplank. I nearly died! We were marched to Church service at Sydney Cathedral, Everyone thought the irony hilarious!’ These ‘visitors’ to the brothels ran the risk of bringing back a venereal ‘souvenir’, a risk Gordon Slatter, among others, was not prepared to take. Slatter met an Australian soldier who was also on leave in Perth who told him of ‘...the sights not to be missed in his city.’ The soldier did not mention Roe Street, but Slatter had already seen it from the train and had decided to avoid it.

We all knew what had happened to one of our draft who had come aboard at Wellington with a dose. His harrowing tale of what the doctor had done to him with an instrument he called the hockey stick put us off illicit sex for life.

There were numerous incidents of drunkenness and misbehaviour by the New Zealanders in Australia, ‘...the usual pranks that must be expected from high spirited men who have been cooped up for some time in a troopship...’, including one, recounted in detail by Jim Eder in

71 Lovegrove, p.17.
73 Kay, ‘The Voyage from NZ to Egypt’, p.8, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/2, NA.
75 Lovegrove, p.16.
Khaki Recollections, where a Baby Austin car was carried to the top of the Post Office steps in Perth. 77 This latter incident appears to confirm Edmund White’s comment made at the time: ‘I rather think that the local residents will not forget the convoy’s leave ashore for quite some time...’, 78 as it had its dénouement some 56 years later. In June 1996, the RSA Review published a letter from a former New Zealand soldier now resident in Perth.

...There is one incident that occurred while the Kiwi troops were in Perth and is still talked about today. Some of the boys during their short stay jokingly lifted a Baby Austin car up the Post Office steps and left it there, causing the owner great inconvenience. Although residing in Perth for the past 28 years I still consider myself as a ‘true blue’ Kiwi and would appreciate if those responsible would own up to the deed and apologise...to the owner who is one Harry Allen.... 79

As an aside, this provides an interesting example of the role of cultural history and memory as the letter prompted a small number of replies, each claiming responsibility on behalf of friends or relatives who were said to have been responsible, but all differing in their account of the incident. 80

Despite close historical, cultural and geographical ties, some New Zealanders were struck by the differences between the two countries. For as one New Zealander, travelling in Australia in the 1930s, had observed:

I think we in New Zealand are inclined to underestimate the size, importance and attractions of the great cities of Australia. Sydney has a population of close on 1,400,000, Melbourne of 1,100,000. ...In comparison the largest towns of New Zealand are puny affairs. It is well for us to realise when we sing our own praises to the detriment of Australia that we have a long way to go before we attain her status. 81

Francis Jackson joined a bus tour into the countryside. There he ‘...travelled for miles along wide roads, and the bareness of the country surprised me. Everything was dried up.’ 82 Not only was the landscape alien, but the houses (‘...nothing like them in New Zealand...’) 83 and even the people seemed different.

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77 Ross, 23 Battalion, p.13; Eder, p.15.
78 Edmund White, Diary, 18 January 1940, p.15, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, ATL.
79 RSA Review, LXXI, 3 (June 1996), p.2. In Eder’s account, the owner was a ‘little old lady’, p.15.
81 H.K. Sumpter, Travelling Light: To Europe and Back on £200, Invercargill: Southland Times Print, ca. 1930, p.9. [Hocken Library, Dunedin].
82 Jackson, p.19.
83 Morrison, Diary, Sunday 9 April 1944, MS Papers 3829, folder 1, ATL.
I can’t finish this without mentioning the Australian girls. They are tops. About eighty per cent of the ones we saw you could describe as really pretty. They have such lovely skin and hair and most have beautiful teeth. You can tell from their carriage and the way they dress that they have plenty of personal pride in appearance, that I am afraid a lot of our girls, especially Wellington ones, have lost.  

Australia contained elements of the known and the unknown. Much was familiar. The New Zealanders had been made welcome and felt comfortable in a culture and society very similar to their own. ‘The population of Perth was most kind to us short stay tourists...’ recalled I7 Railway Operating Company’s Jim Dangerfield, ‘...and I have only friendly memories of that part of...Australia’, 85 and the majority of the New Zealanders also left with a similar ‘...appreciation of West Australian hospitality.’ 86 ‘There were, however, elements of the unfamiliar (apart from those seen in the zoo and, perhaps, Roe and Shew Streets), and it was these that attracted the most attention. Even differences in the most mundane of things provoked interest. Francis Jackson, for example, left the bus in which he had been touring the countryside in order to travel by train back to Perth. His justification was that, although the bus was not uncomfortable, he ‘...had never travelled by anything other than N.Z.R. and I guess it was just the novelty.’ 87 Faced with novel situations and sights, the New Zealanders behaved as tourists. Few consciously identified themselves as such. Travel, after all, was an inevitable element in this war. It was only natural that they would travel on liners, send postcards and buy curios, and kill time sightseeing. But, as had been the case for the Antipodean ‘tourists’ of World War One, this coincidence was enough to affect the way these New Zealanders regarded what they saw. 88 Having spent leave in Western Australia, the Second Division (with very few

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84 B.C.H. Moss, Diary, Monday 24 May [1942], MS Papers 2281, item 1, ‘Diary 14 May 1942-1943’, ATL. For this eroticisation of difference, see Joanna de Groot, ‘‘Sex’ and ‘Race’: The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century’, in Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall, eds, Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary studies of gender in the nineteenth century, London: Routledge, 1989, pp.89-128. de Groot is concerned primarily with the verbal and visual representation of societies in the Middle East during the nineteenth century but this process of eroticising the ‘Other’ need not be confined only to encounters between different racial groups. Implicit in Moss’ comments, however, is the gendered dimension of New Zealand wartime tourism. [I would like to thank Tony Ballantyne for providing this reference].

85 Jim Dangerfield, ‘Memories of “Hostilities Only”’, The Rothesay News, 7, 10 (August 1996), pp.8-9. [I would like to thank Bill Keane for providing me with a copy of this article].


87 Jackson, p.19.

88 White, ‘The Soldier as Tourist’, p.68.
exceptions) boarded their troopships to continue their voyage, an act which to E.S. Hicks meant, '....now, on with the travel.'

To reduce the boredom of shipboard life, and to supplement their daily regimen of lectures, training and drill, a variety of entertainments were organised. Many of these would not have appeared out of place on peacetime voyages. ‘We ...played deck tennis and quoits [and] ... admired the sunsets...’, recalled Sir Howard Kippenberger, while games, sporting events, swimming, concerts, raffles, debates and informative talks on a variety of topics were also held. Many engaged in the most leisurely of tourist pastimes, sunbathing, while others chose alternative entertainment of a type usually not sanctioned by the authorities: ‘[O]ne of course had the beer bar and plenty of gambling which although illegal always seemed to thrive.’ Gambling, while of obvious monetary value to those who won, also helped relieve the boredom and discomfit of the troops by providing a diversion. On one troopship, for example, the troops had sweepstakes on who would be the last to be seasick and on what time the pilot would come aboard in order to guide the ship into port (being indications of both the levels of discomfit and of boredom). The similarities between soldier and civilian tourist activities also included the ritual of the ‘crossing of the line’. On board the Empress of Japan, ‘[a] temporary swimming tank was installed and several of the more important personages were ceremoniously dunked by “Father Neptune”’, while for 23 Battalion, ‘[c]rossing the line was celebrated in time-honoured fashion for a representative number of troops...’, and on other ships the ‘tourists’ received souvenir cards from ‘King Neptune’. These ceremonies had lost their original purpose (which was for the recreation of the crew) and were now only maintained primarily as passenger entertainment on ships sailing between Europe and ports in the Southern Hemisphere.

If Australia represented the familiar, the ‘Eastern’ ports were the unknown, the foreign. ‘For the majority [of 1NZEF]...’ recorded Ormond Burton, Colombo was ‘...their first introduction to the wonders of the magic East: the scents, the colours, the glamour, the mystery and the witchery, the subtle and enchanting loneliness that is so strangely different to all that in New Zealand we regard as beautiful.’ The tourists of 2(NZ) Division also found Colombo

89 Hicks, MS Papers 1442, folder 1, ATL.
90 Kippenberger, p.9.
91 Hicks, MS Papers 1442, folder 1, ATL.
92 Moss, Diary, MS Papers 2281, item 1, ‘Diary 14 May 1942-1943’, ATL.
93 Dangerfield, ‘Memories of “Hostilities Only”’, p.9; Ross, 23 Battalion, p.12; Morrison, Diary, Tuesday 25 April 1944, MS Papers 3829, folder 1, ATL.
95 Burton, p.12.
(and Bombay) strangely different. 'The whole experience was a most interesting one...', wrote John Kennedy, '...and one that I am not likely to forget - it showed us a very different world from the one we are used to.' 96 For Edmund White, Colombo '...promised to be every bit as enchanting as various tourist pamphlets would have you believe....' 97 'The East' was synonymous with 'The Orient', a phrase which as Edward Said has demonstrated, has a host of cultural, historical and material connotations. 98 James Buzard's comment on British and American constructions of 'the Continent' and 'Europe' respectively, is equally true of the 'Orient'. They were seen as '...both foreign and familiar: foreign to the first-time visitor, yet none-the-less, 'others' from the general cultural discourse of home, which shaped visitors' expectations and experience. 99 The shaping of expectations and experience is not necessarily confined only to the visitors, as Edward Said has outlined, '...there was always some form of active resistance....' 100 The process by which the visitors and the visited readjusted, rethought and reformulated their ideas of self and other has been neatly described by Stuart B. Schwartz. 101

In such meetings across cultures, an "implicit ethnography" existed on both sides of the encounter. Members of each society held ideas, often unstated, of themselves and "others" and the things that gave them such identities.... These understandings were often implicit in the sense of being unstated or assumed, a kind of common knowledge or common sense that did not have to be articulated or codified but that permeated the way in which people thought and acted. ...Each group’s sense of its own cultural identity shaped its perception of others, and this in turn was refracted back on self-understanding. 102

In the process of encountering other groups, these 'implicit ethnographies' were subjected to re-examination creating what Schwartz describes as a '...dynamic tension between previous understanding and expectations and new observations and experiences...' and this altered as the encounters changed over time. 103

Because of this implicit ethnography, New Zealander soldiers 'knew' what the East would be like. They had heard about it from their predecessors, they had read about it in the

96 Kennedy to family, 11 October 1941, MS Papers 1449, folder 2, ATL.
97 White, diary, 30 January 1940, p.17, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, ‘Diary 1940-1941’, ATL.
99 Buzard, p.15. [Emphasis in the original].
102 ibid., pp.2-3.
103 ibid., p.3.
works of influential writers, such as Rudyard Kipling and G.A. Henty, they had seen it in portrayed in pictures and films, but more importantly, the Orient was part of a discourse in the West. Just as White’s soldiers in 1AIF were initially unlikely to have a specific image of the ‘Egyptian’, New Zealanders in 2NZEF were equally likely to also have a generalised stereotype of the ‘oriental’ or ‘native’ which was based upon a vast popular literature of race, and they applied this stereotype to the people they encountered. Not only, however, had they come to see, they had come to be seen.

We have had numerous instructions regarding our behaviour at the Eastern port where we are to have leave shortly - it being greatly impressed upon us that ...a thing called “British Prestige” must be maintained at all costs.106

The ‘East’ was, for most individual soldiers, a new and foreign experience, but it was also familiar. They sought (and found) scenes and events which confirmed what they already ‘knew’; they were, to quote White, ‘...seeing the imagination made real.’107 ‘When I first set eyes on this port [Colombo]...’, declared Francis Jackson:

...with its circular breakwater, stumpy, white-walled buildings with sloping red roofs, hotels, business houses, and long, ambling produce-sheds that lined the waterfront within sight of yellow sanded beaches fanned with palms, I likened this place to my dream of an island paradise. Treasure Island on the one side, and John Masefield’s dirty, little tramps with cargoes of tin trays, peacocks, and ebony elephants, on the other.108

John Kennedy also found Colombo ‘familiar’. ‘Right away we were in a picture-book land, natives with many-coloured, long flowing robes, quaint bullock drawn vehicles and strange people’ while for John Blythe, the scenes before him were reminiscent of Somerset Maugham.109

In Colombo, Colin Armstrong was given a small information guide to the city, containing practical information on the exchange rate, local currency, transport, car and rickshaw hireage

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104 Said, Orientalism, pp.1-4. See also Clive J. Christie, ‘British Literary Travellers in Southeast Asia in an Era of Colonial Retreat’, Modern Asian Studies, 28, 4 (1994), pp.673-737. ‘To a far greater extent than post-war British travel literature on Southeast Asia...’, writes Christie, ‘...the pre-Second World War literature of the 1920s and 1930s period is saturated with “exoticism” and “orientalism”. Images, costumes and illustrations, as well as descriptions in books, created a vision of the Orient through which everyday observations and experiences of travel tended to be refracted’, p.675.


106 Kennedy to family, 7 October 1941, MS Papers 1449, folder 1, ATL.

107 White, ‘The Soldier as Tourist’, p.64.

108 Jackson, p.20.

Colombo.—Information for Visiting Troops

Read and keep—the advice may help you

Your points of dismissal are situated within easy walking distance of the centre of the Town where all the leading Shops, Banks, Hotels, Restaurants and Business Houses are situated. It is recommended that you confine your shopping to this area which is known as the Fort.

INFORMATION

Information Bureaus for visiting Troops are situated on Galle Face Green and at Walkers Building in Leyden Bastion Road opposite the Passenger Jetty (See map overleaf.) In your own interests it is advisable to obtain reliable information at these points.

CANTEENS

Lady residents of Colombo staff and run two Canteens where Lunches, Teas and light refreshments are obtainable at very reasonable rates. These Canteens are situated at Walkers Building in Leyden Bastion Road opposite the Passenger Jetty and at the Headquarters of the Ceylon Planters’ Rifle Corps Galle Buck (See map overleaf.)

HOTELS

Special arrangements have been made for the convenience of visiting Troops. Quick Lunches are served at most of the Hotels at special prices.

CURRENCY

Rupees and Cents.—100 Cents = 1 Rupee. Notes.—One, Two, Five and Ten Rupees upwards.
Coinage.—One, Five, Ten, Twenty-five and Fifty-cent pieces.

Note.—1 Rupee =2s. approx. (Aust.) = 1/6d. approx. (Eng.)
50 Cents = 1s. " " = 9d. " "
25 " = 6d. " " = 5d. " "
10 " = 3d. " " = 2d. " "

CHANGING OF MONEY

All the main Banks are situated in the Fort area and Troops are advised to change their money in these Banks between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Licensed money changers will be found at various points and it should be noted that, subject to fluctuations, rates of exchange are approximately as follows:

One-pound Australian Note = 10 Rupees 50 Cents
One-pound Australian Silver = 9 Rupees 70 Cents
One-pound English Note = 13 Rupees
One-pound English Silver = 12 Rupees

RICKSHAWS

These are built to carry one person only and fares are as follows:

Not exceeding Half an hour = 35 Cts. = 9d. (Aust.) = 7d. (Eng.)
Not exceeding One hour = 50 " = 1s. " = 9d. "
For each subsequent Half hour = 10 " = 3d. " = 2d. "

CARS AND BUSES

Colombo residents have arranged for a limited number of buses and private motor cars to convey Troops free of charge to various places of interest. These conveyances assemble on the Galle Face Green in the morning and at the Headquarters of the Ceylon Planters’ Rifle Corps, Galle Buck, in the afternoon.
rates, hotels and two maps; one of the central business district, the other of the city itself. It advised the troops that 'little beauty lies to the right of the Fort area and the most pleasant sight-seeing is to be found in the parks and tree-shaded roads of the Cinnamon Gardens residential quarter.'\textsuperscript{110} Those troops who had arrived intent on purchasing local goods or souvenirs were told that '...it is recommended that you confine your shopping to [the] ...area which is known as the Fort', and to '...make your purchases from shops ofstanding. Special precautions should be made in purchasing Jewellery and Stones. Beware of spurious imitations offered at tempting prices.'\textsuperscript{111} The dangers of the inauthentic were to be studiously avoided. Language was one souvenir which was seen to be 'authentic'. In Egypt and Italy the troops would learn a number of phrases and commands, but even in their brief visits to the East many could claim that '...much of the native language is now part of our own....'\textsuperscript{112} The knowledge of a few phrases and words in a language not commonly taught or spoken in New Zealand was 'proof' of one's authenticity as a traveller, and as such, was a status symbol. Gordon Slatter recalled pestering his sergeant with questions about the war '...because he had been in it and was going back to it.' The sergeant was philosophical about death, '...if you were killed you wouldn't have to worry about it [being wounded] any more. So maleesh. Yeah maleesh we said, not really knowing what it meant.'\textsuperscript{113}

A few of the troops were more adventurous in their pursuit of the 'Other'. Arthur Helm travelled beyond the city confines to Mount Lavinia, '...one of the show places of Ceylon.'\textsuperscript{114} Met at the station by a 'native guide', Helm and his companions undertook a tour of the local Buddhist temple, after first negotiating a price; 'We beat him down to 50 cents each, and set off.'\textsuperscript{115} Time was of the essence, and the constraints imposed by the shortness of their visit left Helm regretting that he did not see 'all' there was to see. 'If we could have had longer leave...' he lamented, '...my intention had been to go to Kandy in the heart of Ceylon, but it was not possible in the time at my disposal.'\textsuperscript{116} Others also found that time did not allow them to see and do all that they wished, and consequently there were numerous examples of troops overstaying their leave.

\textsuperscript{110} 'Colombo. Information for Visiting Troops', Colombo, 28 April, 1941, p.2. [Colin Armstrong, private collection of photographs and World War Two ephemera kindly lent to author by Miss D.J. Armstrong, Dunedin. Henceforth Armstrong Collection].

\textsuperscript{111} ibid., pp.1, 4.

\textsuperscript{112} Kennedy to family, 11October 1941, MS Papers 1449, folder 1, ATL.


\textsuperscript{114} Helm, \textit{Fights and Furloughs in the Middle East.}, p.6. [Mount Lavinia was a hotel on the coast].

\textsuperscript{115} ibid., p.6.

\textsuperscript{116} ibid., p.7.
The New Zealanders were equally taken by India. ‘At 9 or 10 o’clock on the morning of September 15th we sighted land - INDIA! the land of Rajahs, diamonds, Ghandi, romance! ...What a sight, the docks and shipping of Bombay! and how keenly interested we were in the 1001 sights to be seen.’ Lieutenant R.L. Kay, of 25 Battalion was also captivated by India. ‘We marched through the finest city streets I have ever seen...’ he wrote, ‘...they were lined on either side by very attractive buildings, modern and ancient, European and Oriental in design. ...It is the most fascinating, imposing city I have seen, and the people just as remarkable.’ Indeed, he found the people so remarkable that, visiting the zoo in Bombay, he thought ‘...the curiously-dressed people about me as interesting as the animals in the cages.’

Returning to the Middle East in 1944, after having spent six months’ furlough in New Zealand, Arthur Helm’s vessel joined a convoy ‘Bombay-bound.’ Bombay held a particular significance for Helm, it being the birth-place of Kipling, and as he recited Kipling’s poem ‘The Cities’, he wondered ‘...if there was still anything in the city associated with his stay there.’ It is worthwhile quoting Helm at length here, because he is one of the few who consciously identified himself as a tourist, as the title of his book (Kiwis on Tour in Egypt and Italy. A Soldier’s Story of Travel and Sightseeing in Egypt, Italy, and Sicily) suggests.

I was particularly keen to go ashore, for this was my first visit to Bombay. ...I had gone to the trouble a few days before of collecting all available data on the city and it had been put into a three-page pamphlet for the information of the troops. We have been told time and again that we should learn more about our mighty Empire, and yet when now we had the chance of seeing one of the largest cities of India, it was denied to all but a very small percentage. ...I had mapped out a trip to the Hanging Gardens, the Malabar Hills, the Tower of Silence where the Parsees expose their dead, and a drive along the Grant Road, which is probably the most famous - or infamous - street of ill-fame in the world. But it was not to be, for I did not draw leave. [Delays in getting ashore meant that those who did draw leave] ...had only three hours ashore before they had to report back to the wharf, and not much could be seen in that short time. ...The leave party returned laden with purchases, and the old-timers reported that the city was even filthier than Cairo, and the smell exceeded that ...in the latter city.

Having identified the source of his idea of India (Kipling), Helm sought to compare and confirm what he ‘knew’ with what he would encounter in Bombay. He created his own

117 R.N. Collier, ‘Private Diary of voyage to Egypt via India from NZ and activities with 26 NZ Battalion from 28 Aug. 1940 to 10 Nov. 1941’, p.1, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/6, NA. [Emphasis in the original].
118 Kay, ‘The Voyage from NZ to Egypt’, p.18, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/2, NA.
119 ibid., p.24.
120 A.S. Helm, Kiwis on Tour in Egypt and Italy. A Soldier’s Story of Travel and Sight-seeing in Egypt, Italy and Sicily, Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1946, p.5.
121 ibid., p.6.
122 ibid., pp.6-7.
123 For a discussion of Kipling’s India, see Ali Behdad, Belated Travellers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994. See also Ralph J. Crane, Investing India:
itinerary, and aware of the constraints imposed by time, he selected what he considered to be the most important sights; those which were representative of 'his' India. Denied the opportunity to confirm his knowledge first-hand, he could satisfy his preconceptions second-hand, by relating the experiences of his companions to a place he already knew, Cairo.

Arriving at the Seychelles Islands, Gordon Slater described the scene which greeted him. 'With the palm trees sweeping down to the beach the idyllic scene seemed to me like the setting for a romantic novel, especially when a handsome young Colonial Officer in a white uniform, a genuine pukka sahib, came out in a white launch which moored alongside.'\(^{124}\) Reality rudely interrupted fantasy, however, when '...the effect was completely spoiled by a foul discharge from an outlet pipe upon that pristine deck....'\(^{125}\) This would be emblematic of the New Zealanders' experiences with the East. Initially they found an Orient which was as Said describes, '...a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences...'\(^{126}\) but as they moved beyond the superficial, they eventually came to be repelled by the very things they had sought. Leaving Colombo, Hugh Raine enthusiastically described the scenery. 'The day we left was as perfect a day as any we had experienced...' he wrote, '...and we saw many wonderful houses opposite us when anchored in the stream. ...Colours were introduced and together with the light green grass and trees combined into a very peaceful and quiet setting, some of the trees were in flower and the colours were exotic, bright yellows and scarlets were predominating over the other colours.'\(^{127}\) For Raine, the day was perfect and the scenery exotic, but for others, the scenery had been ruined by the presence of people. 'Unlike Fremantle,' wrote John Westbrook, '...you don't have to keep brushing flies off your face - you have to keep shooing beggars, men and kids, away from you.'\(^{128}\) These comments echoed those of earlier New Zealand visitors, one of whom had advised: 'If one wishes to feel the mysticism and glamour of an eastern city such as Colombo, one should enter it at night and leave it before daylight reveals its squalor and filth.'\(^{129}\)

\(^{124}\) Slater, p.62.

\(^{125}\) ibid.

\(^{126}\) Said, Orientalism, p.1.

\(^{127}\) Hugh Raine to parents, April-May 1941, pp.5-6, Micro MS 0578, ATL.

\(^{128}\) Westbrook to family, 1 February 1940, p.1, MS Papers 1407, folder 1, ATL.

\(^{129}\) Sumpter, p.17.
Colombo, Bombay and the other 'Eastern' ports would be, for the vast majority of 2(NZ) Division, their first (albeit brief) encounter with a truly foreign Other. Their visit to these places was, by necessity, brief. They had no time for anything but the most superficial interactions with the people and places they encountered - a problem which led one New Zealander to declare: 'Looking back, our visit to India was a wonderful experience, but if I ever see it again it will be as a tourist, and not as a private in the New Zealand army.' Yet superficiality is the hallmark of the tourist, if as Paul Fussell rather scathingly observes, "...the tourist moves towards the security of pure cliché." The New Zealanders had arrived in 'The East' as tourists and it was as tourists that the East received them. It was a pattern that was to be repeated.

Yet these men (and a small number of women) were no ordinary tourists. Travel, after all, was an inevitable element in war for New Zealanders - an element which was secondary or coincidental to their primary role. They faced severe limitations on their capacity to be tourists. Many would get no further than Greece or Crete. Their travel was restricted and regulated, their behaviour proscribed by the army - many could, no doubt, empathise with 1NZEF member Harold von Dadelszen's protest: 'Of course all the interesting places ...were placed out of bounds.' Even in the most fundamental of all 'tourist' activities- choice of destination - the 'freedom' said to be provided by tourism was denied them. But not all the troops saw it this way. 'The soldier would possibly see more of the life of these places compared to the tourist...' wrote one New Zealand Army Service Corps driver, '...as his trips are not controlled by the usual round of sight-seeing.' Nonetheless, many did experience the war itself through the lens of tourism and the vast majority were tourists at some point.

130 Here, 'the Other' is taken to refer to an external or foreign Other, as opposed to 'internal Others' such as Maori or immigrants in New Zealand.
131 Collier, 'Private Diary of voyage to Egypt', p.2, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/6, NA. [Emphasis in original]. See also C.J. Koch, 'Crossing the Gap: Asia and the Australian Imagination', in Crossing the Gap: A Novelist's Essays, London: Hogarth, 1987. 'All the Australian voyagers saw of Asia...' writes Koch, '...was the ports, en route to their lost home in Britain', p.3, cited in Gerster, p.201.
132 Fussell, Abroad, p.39.
133 1AIF received a similar reception in Egypt. See White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.51.
134 'Over one-third of the 16 700 New Zealanders who embarked for Greece failed to return', McLeod, p.44.
135 Harold von Dadelszen to family, 1 August 1918, p.3, MS Papers 0588, ATL.
136 R.G. Hambling to family, 6 June 1941, p.3, MS 1018, Auckland Institute and Museum Library. [Henceforth AIM].
By whatever route they reached their official destination, the members of 2(NZ) Division observed the rituals and protocols of tourism. The majority would arrive at that archetypal tourist destination, Egypt, untouched by war itself, and possessing a confident tourist spirit. This spirit would be tested under the most trying conditions, but for a proportion of the troops, it would not change even when they encountered the realities of war. For these men, 14 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment gunner Thomas Birks’ subsequent comment would encapsulate their experiences: ‘...some of my letters should have amply proved by now that there’s an element of free Cook’s Tours about the whole business with a bit of incidental action thrown in now and then....’

They would remain, for the duration of the war, no ordinary tourists.

138 Thomas L. Birks to his mother, letter # 60, 16 May 1942, p.5, MS 1413, folder 3, box 1, AIM.
‘PETER FRASER’S TOURS’

Peter Fraser’s Tours. Our next winter cruise is about to fill up! All latest ships - best of accommodation (if you can find it). Dates of sailing and ports of call will be rumoured around all camps in New Zealand about February and March.... Book your bunk now.¹

¹ The Blitztourists, 1941, p.27. [Second Echelon Souvenir publication].
Not all New Zealand troops travelled to Egypt via the same route. For those on ‘Peter Fraser’s Tours’, their wartime itinerary would include a number of stopovers missing from the Division’s main ‘tour’. One would be in England, where they would spend an extended period of time, and would offer the chance to see at first hand the intensely familiar images of a place that many still regarded as ‘Home’. Another excursion would be to a country familiar to New Zealand’s original soldier-tourists - South Africa; but this experience would prove to be a divisive one, exposing the myth of unity through the common experience of war to early scrutiny.

In May 1940, elements of the Second Echelon, including 23 and 28(Maori) Battalions were diverted to England to help defend against what was then, an imminent invasion by German forces. For these ‘tourists’, the diversion added more stops to their wartime itinerary. ‘[H]ere we are dashing off to Durban or Capetown...’, wrote Roderick Fell ‘...which is one of the last places I thought I would see just now.’ Arriving in Capetown in May 1940, the members of the Second Echelon encountered a similar reception as they had experienced in Australia, and they reacted in similar ways. ‘It was very pleasant to put one’s feet on dry land after four weeks at sea...’ continued Fell, ‘...and also to see one’s first foreign people.’ For Fell (and others), this was their first contact with a distinctly foreign ‘other’, and his initial impressions were not, however, favourable.

During the morning the men had been amusing themselves by tossing pennies down to the blacks on the wharf and watching them fight for them. They are an awful lot, dirty, rags of clothes and unintelligent faces, next door to a monkey I think - although I suppose it is not their fault.

Other New Zealanders concurred with Fell. ‘It’s a big town, lousy with niggers [sic]...’, recorded one, while 28(Maori) Battalion member Henare Ngata wrote:

...we passed a lot of the natives, not very nice, or intelligent specimens, which does explain a little the reaction of the whites towards them ...for some of them did look comical with their pot bellies, black, black skin and very unprepossessing features.

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2 Fell to his mother, 13 May 1940, p.8, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
3 ibid., 31 May 1940, pp.3-5.
4 B.I. Bassett to his wife, 26 May 1940, “Onward” - A New Zealand Soldier’s letters to his wife, 30 Apr. 1940 - 18 May 1941*, p.32, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/9, NA.
5 H.K. [Henare Kohere] Ngata to family, 12 June 1940, ‘Private letters: May 1940 to April 1941’, pp.5-6, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.
But contact with this 'Other' also made the New Zealanders acutely aware of the presence of an internal 'Other', providing one of the first real challenges to their tourist solidarity.6 'The Maoris were not allowed to land...', recorded 22 Battalion member Patrick Aylett, '...as they [the South African whites] treat coloured races with harshness, kicking them if they get in the way; different altogether from our ideas.'7 'The colour problem is nothing short of a tragedy...' declared another New Zealander, '...and has to be seen to be believed. They simply cannot credit the esteem we have for our Maoris, who by the way, had to go ashore in conducted bus tours.'8 Indeed, 28 Battalion members received lectures prior to their arrival in Capetown in which they were advised '...that if anything untoward happened ...not to make a fuss.'

Meanwhile a number of incidents occurred on the boat and probably because our nerves were so fraught with tension we put an exaggerated interpretation on them, for it seemed to us at the time that even the pakehas on the ship wanted to dissociate themselves from us.... I personally was not sorry to leave [Capetown] as our leave had been spoilt by the apprehension we might be rebuffed or even insulted and our nerves were so highly strung that we were hardly in a mood to enjoy ourselves.9

Nonetheless, many of the other soldier-tourists did enjoy themselves in Capetown. 'Got leave and had a wonderful reception...', wrote one, '...picked up by private car with several naval lads, and after a sightseeing tour, had afternoon tea and a bottle of beer ...in a private home near Wijnberg.'10 Others 'jumped at the chance' to take conducted tours of Cape Town. 'We went out past the hospital, through what is called Groote Schuwn Estate, Cecil Rhodes' property, ...we passed through a park with springbok and zebra dotted about and way up on Table Mountain, the Rhodes Memorial.'11 These were all typical tourist activities, and the New Zealand soldier-tourists eagerly embraced their opportunities to see the sights; leading 23 Battalion's official history to note:

[T]he excesses of some, coupled with a large amount of absence without leave, led to a gradual reduction of shore leave until the stragglers had been rounded up. ...[S]ome men tried to get to Johannesburg, so eager were they to take the fullest advantage of their opportunity to see the world.12

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6 The other main challenges to solidarity were the issue of rank and the privileges provided to officers - a contentious issue throughout the war. See McLeod, Ch. 11., ‘All blokes together?’, pp.156-169.
7 Aylett to family, 14 June 1940, MS Papers 1603, ATL.
8 Bassett to his wife, 28 May 1940, p.35, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/9, NA.
9 Ngata to family, 12 June 1940, pp.5-6, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.
10 H.J. de Stigter, 'A Rough Diary of an Army Career, January 1940 to 1943', p.1, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/8, NA.
11 Fell to his mother, 31 May 1940, p.4, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
12 Ross, 23 Battalion, p.12.
But within their generally favourable reactions there were occasional comments which showed 
that not all the tourists were united in their condemnation of the ‘colour problem’. ‘Taken all 
round...’ wrote Roderick Fell, ‘...I enjoyed my stay at Cape Town and if as they say it does 
not get any colder than it was then, it should be a rather nice place to live in - apart from the 
blacks.’\textsuperscript{13} Throughout all of their tour, many New Zealanders would adhere unquestioningly to 
a particular view of the world - one derived from their cultural links with England, which 
‘...divided the world into British, foreign and native.’\textsuperscript{14} Like other Anglo-Saxon tourists from 
the Dominions in this period, these New Zealanders went abroad ‘...as citizens of the British 
empire. They were, thus, armed for foreign encounters with their confidence in the racial 
superiority of the British people.’\textsuperscript{15} Indeed, for some, there was nothing that they would not 
believe of ‘natives.’

We bury [Gunner] F... of ‘E’ Troop who had contracted a dread disease at Cape 
Town. He was only 21 and a nice boy. But we had all been warned about the 
Black [sic] women of Africa and so he had only himself to blame. The male nurses 
who attended him on the ship were forced to wear masks and gloves while looking 
after him, as he was in such a bad state.\textsuperscript{16}

Their short stopover in South Africa, therefore, provided not only opportunities but also 
challenges for the sight-seeing soldiery. While almost all were universal in their dislike for the 
‘colour problem’, few were moved to introspection. This was, for the majority, simply another 
sight, another peculiar aspect of a ‘foreign’ country; after all, ‘...the tourist is interested in what 
is unique and particular about the people and places she or he visits.’\textsuperscript{17} For some, most notably 
for 28(Maori) Battalion (as Henare Ngata’s comments suggest), the experience of South Africa 
would place pressure on the notion that the common experience of war would unite both Maori 
and pakeha.\textsuperscript{18} But for most, South Africa was quickly forgotten, relegated to their diaries or 
letters as simply another place to be ticked off their list. There were other sights which they 
were keen to see. ‘Sierra Leone hove up about 7 am...’ recorded Major William Moffat, 
‘...[and] all were keen to see the spot with the notorious reputation - “The White Man’s 
Grave”’.\textsuperscript{19} There were also other countries which held far greater appeal.

\textsuperscript{13} Fell to his mother, 31 May 1946, p.9, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
\textsuperscript{14} White, ‘Sun, Sard and Syphilis’, p.50.
\textsuperscript{15} Pesman Cooper, p.47.
\textsuperscript{16} Huson, diary, June 12 [1940?], p.15, Accession 9102457, AM.
\textsuperscript{17} Tim Rowse and Albert Moran, ‘Peculiarly Australian: The Political Construction of Cultural Identity’, in S. 
\textsuperscript{18} Phillips, ‘War and National Identity’, p.105. This myth was promulgated not only through war, but also 
through sport. See Jock Phillips, ‘Rugby, War and the Mythology of the New Zealand Male’, NZJH, 18, 2 
(October 1984), p.103.
\textsuperscript{19} Moffat, diary, 7 June [1940?], Accession 1990.356, AM.
Unlike the vast majority of 2(NZ) Division, the opportunity to see the world for these soldiers would include England, ‘...every loyal tourist’s preferred goal.’20 ‘There is still great speculation as to our ultimate destination...’ wrote 22 Battalion’s Roderick Fell, ‘...at the moment everyone is betting on England - then France. It would be wonderful if we went to England....’21 The experience of England was only offered to a ‘fortunate’ few within the division’s ranks, and they eagerly embraced this unexpected opportunity to see ‘home’. This set them apart from the rest of the Division, and in the words of the Official Historian of 23 Battalion ‘...they developed a spirit of exclusiveness which was ...partly the result of being nicknamed “Cook’s Tourists” and the “Glamour Boys” by those units which had gone straight to Egypt.’22 The only other significant numbers of New Zealand soldiers to reach England were those chosen for the Officer Cadet Training Units (OCTU).23 For both groups, England loomed large in the collective imagination as it was the centre of New Zealand’s literary, cultural and economic world. These ‘tourists’, like the Australian subjects in Richard White’s study, ‘...expected to find there, not something exotic and strange but the old world, a place that had long been familiar and that displayed all the intimate familiarity of a place that [had] only ever been imagined.’24

This expectation of encountering the familiar or the imagined was, of course, not limited to soldiers alone. Alan Mulgan, a New Zealander touring England in the late 1920s, for example, found his expectations matched reality.

I felt another thrill of identification. So it goes on. Day by day you come upon in reality, types and things you have read about - policemen and flower girls, Phil May’s eccentricities, deferential waiters, haughty young ladies and long waits at tea shops, names of businesses and streets with which you have been familiar all your life.25

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21 Fell to his mother, 13 May 1940, p.5, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
22 Ross, 23 Battalion, p.19.
23 From November 1943, New Zealand officer candidates were sent to England instead of Palestine, McLeod, p.162.
25 Alan Mulgan, Home: A New Zealander's Adventure, London: Longmans Green & Co., 1927, p.59. ‘The provincial...’, writes Michael Heyward of Alan Moorehead, ‘...often knows the centre long before he arrives because he has spent so much time conjuring it in his imagination - the locals, in contrast, merely live there....’ Although he prefaced his remarks with the comment that this is ‘...the strange but profoundly Australian sensation of recognising a scene he ...[has] not encountered before’, as Alan Mulgan’s comments (and indeed those of 2(NZ) Division) demonstrate, this sensation was not a peculiarly Australian one. Michael Heyward, ‘Alan Moorehead’, Quadrant, June 1995, p.25. [I would like to thank Dr. Rob Rabel for this reference].
Arriving in England just over a decade later, the 'Glamour Boys' of 2NZEF recorded similar reactions.

...[S]aw most of the sights we know so well in an extraordinarily short distance. It's so very hard to believe we're really here. Everything looks as expected, there's no need for a guide in the city [London] itself, one just seems to know what is round each corner, and the buildings and statues are all familiar.  

England, for Antipodean tourists, was far more than simply another stop on their 'tour', wartime or otherwise. As Pat Kane explained in *A Soldier's Story*:

> From the moment I arrived in London, I loved the old city. Everything seemed so familiar. Perhaps it was that I felt I had reached the very origin of the British way of life which found itself reflected in my own country so many thousands of miles away. Perhaps it was that I was so steeped in British history and literature that I experienced a sense of security and harmony which I had not known since leaving New Zealand.

For tourists such as Kane, London (and England) had additional significance. It offered not only the chance to view those 'familiar' sights and to give, in the words of Richard White, '...their imaginative world some reality...', but also to gain entry into the myth of England. Entry into this myth had hitherto (with the exception of 1NZEF) been almost exclusively restricted to a privileged few in New Zealand who, like their counterparts in Australian society, had the funds, leisure, lack of family responsibility and the desire to travel. It was the opportunity to enter this mythical England which had greater meaning for the troops individually and for New Zealand society in general, for in Keith Sinclair's opinion '...there can be little doubt that New Zealanders retained their attachment to Great Britain longer, for instance, than Australians.' As publisher and would-be author Blackwood Paul had noted in the mid-1930s:

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26 Bassett, 23 June 1940, pp.71-72, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/9, NA.
27 Kane, p.99.
29 ibid., p.44.
In New Zealand a great number of our young men and young women ...scrape and save their shillings in the hope that they may some day go “home”. ...And then they come back ready to tell their eager listeners the truth about the motherland, their mystical “home”. They may bring back with them many mistaken ideas.... But those ideas, for better or for worse, will be instilled in the minds of their friends in their own country and will soak in far more deeply into the minds of many people in the Dominion than the sayings of newspapers however oft repeated.31

Like Paul’s young men and young women, many of the New Zealand soldiers in England were sightseeing on behalf of eager listeners (and readers) at home, and they were determined to make the most of their opportunity. Henare Ngata of 28(Maori) Battalion, for example, found that ‘[I]...passed through a lot of ...places that I’d read about, but never thought I’d see...’ and lamented that it ‘...made me wish I had paid more attention to my history and geography.’32 Nevertheless he was determined to ‘...try to see as much of the country as I can, Scotland and Wales included.’33 Visiting Canterbury Cathedral, Allan Doig (then a 24 year old sergeant serving with 25 Battery, 4 Field Regiment and selected for OCTU in December 1943)34 wrote: ‘...there is not much for me to say because I brought a booklet about it which I will send you....’ Finding the design of the Cathedral unusual, he apologised to his family for not finding out the reasons behind the design: ‘...no doubt there is an explanation to it which I did badly in not finding out what it was.’35 For Allan Doig and others, it was an opportunity not to be missed. As the editors of the Second Echelon Magazine, The Blitzztourists, proclaimed:

To us of the Second Echelon has been granted an experience denied others of our comrades serving overseas; the opportunity to see for ourselves the realities for which we fight.36

England created a number of expectations among some of the tourists of 2NZEF. These ‘realities’ for which the New Zealanders were fighting were essentially idealised representations of England, centred around the then, conventional images of rural and urban England - images which, in the main, they shared with their Anzac predecessors. Like those of Australia, New Zealand’s notions of the ideal landscape were English. Popular conventions in art, literature

32 Ngata to family, 9 July1940, p.9, WA II, Series I, DA 442/4, NA.
33 ibid., 17 August 1940, p.12.
34 Allan Doig, interview, Dunedin 29 June 1995.
35 Allan Doig to family, 30 December 1944, pp.30-31. [Collection of letters kindly lent to author by Mr Allan Doig, Dunedin. Originals in the possession of Mr Doig].
36 The Blitzztourists, 1941, p.1.
and landscape gardening had all been based on English models.\textsuperscript{37} In New Zealand, as in Australia, this ideal was directly expressed in the '...panoply of legislation ...on land, housing, social welfare [and] education...' and like Australia, the ideological foundation of such legislation was the idealised images of an arcadian pre-industrial England.\textsuperscript{38} The extent to which these images were internalised by the New Zealanders is evident in the reactions of many of the troops 'touring' England. Eric Miller, a sapper with 1NZEF, recorded his first impressions.

I believe this to be one of the greatest days of my life, because I saw in reality dozens of things I had longed to see from earliest childhood, quaint villages with crooked streets, thatched cottages, old stone manor houses, rooks cawing in elm-trees, rural scenes of old England.\textsuperscript{39}

A New Zealand author and traveller / tourist visiting England in the 1930s recorded a similar reaction. 'All our dreams of England's sylvan beauty and picturesque orderliness were being realised', he wrote. 'Small wonder that we behaved like children at their first pantomime.'\textsuperscript{40} 2NZEF were no less impressed. Henare Ngata found '[a]ll that you've read about Bonnie Scotland and Beautiful England are no exaggeration, just like one big garden with everything neatly placed - all fields like parks, and hedges trim and neat...'\textsuperscript{41} while Allan Doig declared:

...the country is more than I ever imagined it to be. It is so beautiful and green with trees and quaint old thatched houses dotted all over the countryside. There are lanes and side roads everywhere and old farms which are very, very beautifully typical.\textsuperscript{42}


\textsuperscript{40} Sumpter, p.30.

\textsuperscript{41} Ngata to family, 9 July 1940, p.46, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.

\textsuperscript{42} Allan Doig to family, 20 December 1943, pp.45-46. [Doig Collection].
Others struggled to describe the landscape. Roderick Fell, a member of 22 Battalion, for example, sought comparisons in the imaginary world of art. Mychett Place, the camp where he was stationed, was ‘...very delightful ...lots of trees etc. just like an English landscape [should be]...’ while the colours of the trees around him were ‘...simply wonderful ...just like a painting.’ 43 Travelling through the countryside he wrote:

We thought at the time that the country was too wonderful for words, but since seeing more of Scotland and some of England I realise that each scene is more beautiful than the last, if that is possible. 44

To many of the New Zealanders, England was ‘too wonderful’ for words to describe. As Richard White maintains, this sense of inadequacy reveals far more than a lack of imagination. Like the Australians who visited England in his study, the New Zealanders of 2NZEF were also ‘...faced with describing a landscape they had already accepted as an ideal model for nature - a model which had previously only existed in art and the imagination.... Cultural dependence meant that the world of the imagination and the geographical reality of England were one and the same place.’ 45 It was a dependence which Blackwood Paul, unlike the majority of New Zealand tourists, acknowledged.

The beauty of England in the springtime is beyond all description. We who come from the colonies to England come with high hopes of the English spring. Is not the whole of English poetry a song of the English country? And is not the glory of the English country in its springtime? We in the Dominions have no poetry of our own to speak of yet. And so we are nurtured on primroses and violets, foxgloves and wildroses. It is all a little unreal, twice as far away as fairy land. 46

Allan Doig shared these feelings. Sent to England for OCTU, he spent seven weeks preliminary training at Sevenoaks, Kent, before a further seven months of training at Catterick Camp, Yorkshire. Immersed in the ‘tourist tradition’ of the Division during his two years in Egypt, news of his imminent departure to ‘...this beautiful old Island Fortress [England]...’ came as ‘...the most stunning blow of all.’ 47 His letters to his fiancée and family demonstrate his sense of awe and, to him, the unreality of being in England. The very next day after his arrival in England, he was able to describe The Strand as:

...just an ordinary business and busy street, but like all places in England, there is something old and wonderful about it. ...[A]ll of which made me feel as though - well perhaps I would wake up sometime [and] find I wasn’t there after all. 48

43 Fell to family, 20 June [1940], p.1, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
44 ibid., 20 June [1940], p.5.
46 Blackwood Paul, p.21.
47 Allan Doig to family, 20 December 1943, pp.21-22. [Doig Collection].
48 ibid., 20 December 1943, p.31. [My emphasis].
Despite this sense of it all being a little unreal or dreamlike - this feeling of inadequacy when faced with the ideal - there were some who found flaws in the myth. Henare Ngata, while impressed with ‘Bonnie Scotland and Beautiful England’ also found that ‘[g]enerally speaking ...the cities looked dingy, not dirty exactly, but with a sort of hazy smoky appearance about them.’ To Pat Kane, England was a ‘nation of chimney pots’.

As I looked through the window of the train I was amazed at the density of the double-storied houses, separated each from the next by concrete partitions. There were buildings upon buildings, no traces of lawns or gardens, no trees. [It was] ...my first daylight glimpse of England, a nation of chimney pots.

These images were not entirely unexpected. New Zealanders visiting England prior to the 1940s were also aware of these ‘...industrial sores...’ as The Blitztourists put it. ‘It is of course chiefly around the English countryside that English patriotism gathers...’, wrote Blackwood Paul. ‘But in a quite astonishing way London, even a London in February which is usually a London of fog, can continue the fascination. Ugly, grimy Tilbury and all those dreadful miles of slums and smoke which separate it from St. Pancras do much to spoil good first impressions.’ Even Alan Mulgan, for whom England (as the title of his work suggests) was ‘Home’, wrote of its ‘desolation’.

The ugliest sight I had in England was of a stretch of “black country” near Birmingham.... It equalled any description I had ever read of this iron country’s desolation. As far as one could see were hideous factories, heaps of rubbish, filthy ponds, sordid streets, and blasted heaths. There was not a spot of green.

Given the inflated expectations of many of the New Zealanders, it was not surprising that London’s (and other English cities’) ‘sordid streets’ could spoil what the visitors were determined to be good first impressions. In a sense also, these reactions were not entirely unexpected, after all, New Zealand’s image of itself was partly a reaction to industrial England. In fact, so deeply entrenched were these images of urban England’s ‘industrial sores’ that some New Zealanders expressed their surprise when they found that it was not as bad as they had expected.

49 Ngata to family, 9 July 1940, p.9, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.
50 Kane, p.99.
51 The Blitztourists, 1941, p.1.
52 Blackwood Paul, pp.10-11.
53 Mulgan, p.84.
54 They appear to have shared these inflated expectations with Australians of this era. See White, ‘Bluebells and Fogtown’, p.54.
England’s poverty is a blight, but I must say that what I saw of slums did not reach the depths of expectations. I found men, women and children better dressed and more healthy in appearance than I had pictured.55

Yet very few, if any, of 2NZEF’s accounts of England mention this same blight. They were tourists of a sort and as such, they were more impressed with other images of England. As Blackwood Paul had observed:

I saw great poverty in England. But I was more impressed by her riches than her poverty. I think it must be the same with all colonial visitors. For after all there is no delight in a visit to the East End.56

Although the East End may not have provided any delight for the New Zealanders, England offered numerous other experiences simply unavailable at home. Pat Kane found himself ‘...absolutely fascinated by the London underground railway system, the escalators, the slot ticket-machines, the labyrinth of corridors, the speed of the electric engines, and the self-closing doors of the carriages.’57 The sheer size of London and other cities was impressive and for J.H. Huston of 5 Field Regiment, ‘metropolitan’ England could also provide sights not seen in ‘provincial’ New Zealand.

Forty-eight hours leave granted and off we go to London, ...so N.Z. invaded London. There is only one London in the world and [the] boys gaze spellbound at buildings and the traffic as it dashes to and fro. ...We are all going to meet later at a Night Club because we all want to see these “Fan Dances” and “Strip Tease” shows we’ve heard such a lot about.58

Like many others, Huston was not to be disappointed at his initiation into cosmopolitan culture.

On came the show and it was certainly good. The Fan Dance was first and is really clever. Then a song or two and then the Star Turn of the evening and what we’d come all the way from NZ to see, “The Strip Tease”, and believe me it is ART.59

London had, of course, offered such sexual opportunities for earlier New Zealand tourists, 1NZEF in particular.60 An historian of Anglo-Australian relations in the First World War has

55 Mulgan, p.218.
56 Blackwood Paul, p.32.
57 Kane, p.100.
58 Huston, diary, June 24 [1940?], p.15, Accession 9102457, AM.
59 ibid., June 24 [1940?], p.16. [Emphasis in the original].

noted, for example, that there were ‘...large numbers of prostitutes, especially in London, pestering the men, who were highly paid by British standards. The number of prostitutes grew, and reports abound of them propositioning the men in restaurants and at bus queues. Brothels became a nuisance in London, Weymouth and Salisbury.’61 The New Zealanders of 1NZEF were also highly paid by British standards and it is likely, as Nicholas Boyack claims, that their higher rates of pay and willingness to spend it also attracted prostitutes to the New Zealanders, as well as other colonial troops.62

There were also other, more traditional sights which drew tourists to England (as they still do today) with which the New Zealanders of both wars were more familiar. 2NZEF gunner Allan Doig, for example, caught the train to Trafalgar Square and went to see the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace (ironically, the military was a ‘sight’ to a sight-seeing military). Leaving Buckingham Palace, he toured Westminster Abbey where he was ‘...more or less dumb with the wonder of it all...’, and went on to visit Parliament Buildings, Big Ben, the Thames and 10 Downing Street.63 Henare Ngata followed a very similar itinerary and like Doig, he too was impressed with Westminster Abbey. ‘What impressed me was the combination of age and beauty...’, he wrote, ‘...the outside doesn’t give you an indication of the treasures within, but as soon as you enter you feel puny and insignificant. It’s like walking into another world....’64 Others visited Madame Tussaud’s, St. Paul’s Cathedral, Hyde Park or attended the opera or a live show in a London theatre.65 Roderick Fell ‘...decided to have lunch at the Ritz. ...With the tip it cost us 12/6 each! Awful waste, but nice to have been there once.’66

The New Zealanders’ reactions to the English themselves were also mixed. Just as their reactions to the countryside were tempered by images of urban and rural England, so too were their views on the English people. Not only could the countryside disappoint, but the people too, could be disappointing. ‘[I]t was a pleasure to speak to one who could talk English intelligently,’ wrote Henare Ngata:

62 Boyack, Behind the Lines, p.137.
64 Ngata to family, 14 July 1940, p.10, WA II, Series 1. DA 442/4, NA.
65 Kane, p.99.
66 Fell to family, 20 June [1940], pp.12-13, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
For we’ve found that the English can’t speak English ... in fact everywhere we went we heard comments about the beautiful English that the “Mao-ree” boys speak. We’ve heard all sorts of dialects since we’ve been here, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cockney and Scottish and I am convinced that our chaps can speak their language better than they can themselves.67

For 22 Battalion’s Robert Smith, it was not the English who were disappointing, but rather, the ‘foreigners’ who detracted from the ‘English’ experience.

I have seen a great deal of this country [and] have made it my business to get around as much as possible. What I don’t like is the enormous numbers of foreigners particularly Jews who are always out in the safe areas and not in uniform.68

Despite the irritating presence of ‘foreigners’ in the country many regarded as ‘Home’, the ‘Glamour Boys’ of 2NZEF found England to be all that they imagined it would be. Although they were again, ‘no ordinary tourists’, their reactions and responses to England were those of conventional tourists.

Certainly the war itself features very rarely in their accounts of ‘The Voyage’. 28(Maori) Battalion en route to England, for example, received the news of Italy’s entry into the war. ‘The only difference Mussolini’s decision made to the troops...’ recorded the Battalion’s official history, ‘...was to tighten up the anti-aircraft and submarine precautions. To them the war was still intangible.’69 However, for this battalion and the other elements of the Second Echelon in this convoy, war itself would abruptly inject reality.

This sang-froid began to vanish when it was seen that the convoy was no longer moving straight ahead but was changing course every few minutes. ...A feeling of confidence engendered [by the presence of a strengthened escort for the convoy] ...diminished somewhat the next morning when the Aquitania passed through an area covered in oil, drifting timber and other wreckage, including a lifeboat - empty. ...Just before lunch the troops saw, in the distance, a ship half submerged and blazing, and that threatening sight was followed by the jangling of submarine alarms then the distant thud of exploding depth-charges was heard. [That night] ...sleep did not come as easily as usual....70

Yet this incident passes almost without comment in the majority of accounts surveyed. England was tantalisingly close and there would be more significant sights to be seen and recorded. In England, more than in any other of the Division’s stopovers on the way to Egypt, war affected sightseeing directly. Allan Doig wrote that there ‘...was not much doing...’ at Buckingham Palace. ‘The guards are all in battle dress and the King and Queen are not resident there just

67 Ngata to family, 9 July 1940, p.9, WA II, Series I, DA 442/4, NA.
68 R.J.G. Smith to family, 31 December 1940, p.3, MS Papers 1701, ATL.
69 J.F. Cody, 28 (Maori) Battalion, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1956, p.16. [My emphasis].
70 ibid., pp.16-17.
now...’, while Henare Ngata found that ‘...most of the places to see were sandbagged against air-raids and bombs.’ But war, it may be argued, also provided opportunities for many ‘ordinary’ tourist activities - for sightseeing, for souvenir hunting and for touring. Arriving in England, 23 Battalion found, for example, that ‘...the War Office had unexpectedly ordered the New Zealanders to go on leave. Apparently the value to public morale of the appearance of Canadian, Australian and New Zealand troops in London and other cities at this time was held to justify a short postponement of training.’ Despite the hardships and the very real dangers, many of these soldier-tourists found, as J.H. Huston did, that England ‘...had been a great experience for most of us and I think I can safely say, it was the best six months of my life, and I have been around this world quite a bit.’

For these New Zealand tourists England both comforted and confronted. In their reactions to the countryside and the conventional sights, about which they were well versed, they appear to conform to Paul Fussell’s view of the tourist (as opposed to, for him, the ‘traveller’):

Tourism soothes you by comfort and familiarity and shields you from the shock of novelty and oddity. It confirms your prior view of the world rather than shaking it up. Tourism requires that you see conventional things, and that you see them in a conventional way.

England did indeed confirm the New Zealanders’ prior view of the world. England was the centre of their imaginary world, the ideal to which they aspired in many areas, and in their reactions to it - especially towards the English landscape - they adhered to convention.

It is perhaps not surprising that they, and their compatriots in 2(NZ) Division reacted as they did, in a conventionally ‘tourist’ manner to the places they visited. The vast majority of the Second Division were not professional soldiers and for these men, war had provided the unexpected opportunity to travel - an opportunity highly prized in New Zealand society. In a number of ways their experience of war, like that of their Anzac predecessors, was to be entangled in the discourses of tourism. Many had signed up for their ‘tour’ motivated partly by the chance to see the world and they called themselves ‘Peter Fraser’s Tourists’ or ‘Cook’s Tourists’. Their prelude to war (like that of 1AIF and 1NZEF) consisted of a long voyage, a journey undertaken on board some of the great passenger liners of the day. It was time enough in which to imbue a tourist spirit and they had inherited a tourist tradition which encouraged them to see it that way. Indeed, like the Anzacs before them, they made the same ports of call

71 Allan Doig to family, 20 December 1943, p.38. [Doig Collection]; Ngata to family, 14 July 1940, p.10, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.


73 Huston, diary, 18 December [1940], p.39, Accession 9102457, AM.


75 White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.51.
along the way as any other group of Antipodean tourists and their immediate destination was a tourist’s one: either Egypt, or for these, the Second Echelon, England. For almost all of the New Zealand soldiers who had reached England, ‘Peter Fraser’s Tours’ did not end upon leaving England. For the Second Echelon and for those who subsequently arrived for officer training, England was a pleasant, but brief excursion from the main ‘tour’ which would take them through Egypt and Palestine, and on to Italy.

Chapter Three

‘THE COUNTRY OF SIN AND SAND AND SORROW - EGYPT’

Seems unbelievable that we are at last within the Land of the Pharaohs. Our arrival was welcomed audibly all along the route to Maadi Camp by throngs of “wogs” all shrieking out “Noo Zealandie verry goot. Gibbit Backsheesh. Hitler no good, pah!” [sic]. This sincere statement brought plenty of small coins ...but I'm willing to go on record as stating that there will be far more kicks and curses than backsheesh in a few weeks’ time!

Figure 6 - New Zealand troops in front of the pyramids.
(Allan Doig Collection)

1 Fell to family, 20 March 1941, p.1, MS Papers 1575, folder 2, ATL.
2 White, diary, 13 February 1940, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, Diary 1940-1941, p.19, ATL.
Edmund White's comments, made in early 1940, would prove to be prophetic. Egypt, as a destination, held so much promise for the tourists of 2(NZ) Division, but once the boundaries between the observers and the observed, the sightseers and the sights had been transgressed, the New Zealanders were left with a feeling of disillusionment with Egypt, of being 'gypped' by Egypt.3 It was a feeling that they shared with the Antipodean soldier-tourists of the First World War. As Richard White observed: 'Egypt, in infuriating ways, failed to live up to the tourists’ expectations. Its mystery, its dirt, its sensuality became subversive rather than the static objects of the tourists’ gaze.'4 Egypt was reduced to the 'Homeland of the Wogs', the subject of a prize-winning poem by a New Zealand soldier.

...When you go to Egypt, the homeland of the Wogs
You see them on the Strada as on your ghari jogs
You see them on the Delta, when mud your taxi bogs,
In fields and towns and villages, there's nothing else but Wogs.5

Perhaps part of the problem lay with Egypt's ambiguous position, being, as the 2NZEF Education and Rehabilitation Service's booklet on Egypt described it, '...the spot where East meets West....'6 It was, the ERS booklet continued, '[a]s ever ...at the crossroads of the world...' and it was Egypt's '...tremendous responsibility to interpret the East to the West and help the East to understand the West.'7 Therefore no blame could be apportioned to the soldier-tourists if they failed to 'understand' Egypt - for as one First World War 'tourist' in Egypt had observed: '[t]he Eastern alone can understand the Eastern.'8 Although Egypt was neither East nor West, it did belong firmly in the Orient, this being '...less a place in the East than part of a discourse in the West.'9 Not only did Egypt 'belong' in the Orient, it was probably one of the most recognised images of the Orient, for, '...although things have been Europeanised to a

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3 This dissatisfaction with Egypt was not limited to their nationality or to the period. See White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', pp.49-64; and Beverley Nichols, No Place Like Home, London: Jonathan Cape, 1936. Nichols describes the Pyramids of Giza as '...from the sight-seer's point of view ...the World's Biggest Flop...', p.143.
4 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.50; Boyack, Behind the Lines. pp.15-20.
5 Lt E.A. Bastings, '“Wogs!”', [First prize winner in poem competition], Souvenir Magazine "Oreti", Voyage of the M.V. Durban Castle, Italy - New Zealand, December 1945 - January 1946, p.24. [DLW].
6 Richard A. Scobie, Egypt, Education Rehabilitation Service 2NZEF, 1944[?], p.49. [Hocken Library].
7 ibid., p.64.
9 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.50. See also Said, Orientalism, p.84. Said argues that Egypt was in fact, the focal point of Orientalism for much of its history.
certain extent, the oriental aspect is still very strong.' Richard White has demonstrated how, prior to World War One, '[a]s a representation of the Orient, Egypt loomed larger in the Australian imagination than most parts of Asia.' This, he asserts, was based primarily upon fairly rare first-hand experience of Egypt, and disseminated throughout the community by letters passed around, published in local newspapers and trade journals, or serialised in the popular press. Diaries too, were often serialised, or published in their own right.

First-hand contact with Egypt by New Zealanders in this period was probably equally rare. However, by 1918 a large number of New Zealanders could claim to have visited Egypt and the Middle East. In many of the same ways as described by White, their images (and those in the letters of the New Zealanders who did not return from their 'tour') of Egypt contributed to popular perceptions of the 'Orient'. These images in the collective imagination were reinforced or supplemented in the following decades from a variety of sources. Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922, the creation of the legend of Lawrence of Arabia, the films of Rudolph Valentino, E.M. Hull's 'pulp-fiction' desert romances and the ubiquitous Arabian Nights all contributed or continued to contribute to '...those intensely familiar images of camel trains, feluccas on the Nile, the pyramids, the Sphinx - images of mystery, sensuality, the exotic.' As Peter Downes has observed of the 1920s in his survey of entertainment in New Zealand:

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10 T.D. Gerrard, Cairo, Education Rehabilitation Service 2NZEF, 1944[?], p.19, WA II, Series 1, DA 552.23/2, NA.
11 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.50.
12 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.68.
Nurtured as they had been on a diet of hysterically idolised Rudolph Valentino films and highly romanticised versions of Lawrence of Arabia's exploits and books of the ilk of Beau Geste, the amusement seeking public was going through an "Arabian" phase. It was a sort of universal fascination. As long as there were deserts, palm trees, camels, horses, swarthy sheikh-like characters in flowing garb and an abducted lady or two, convention was satisfied; the correctness of locale was of no account. Films, plays, books, songs and musicals all reflected the craze.¹⁴

Not only was popular entertainment influenced by this 'Arabian phase', but interior decoration also reflected the craze. Auckland's Civic Theatre, built in 1929, was an "...exotic world of domes and minarets; a paint and plaster shrine of pseudo Middle Eastern architecture...", a façade which it shared with Dunedin's New Empire theatre, opened in 1928.¹⁵

As well as the popular perceptions, Egypt also held a place in New Zealand's commercial and strategic thinking as it had in the First World War and earlier. The 1885 campaign down the Nile to rescue General Gordon from Khartoum, for example, had attracted numerous volunteers from all over New Zealand (although their offers were declined by the government) while in World War One, New Zealand provided a Division for the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (one brigade from which took part in the ill-fated Gallipoli assault) and a Mounted Rifles Brigade which remained in the Middle East for the duration.¹⁶ This belief in the importance of Egypt for New Zealand's trade and defence continued. One New Zealand soldier, John Hood, observed that the Suez canal '...looked just like a big ditch ...and it was difficult to realise just how important that same ditch has been to the Empire and that it is the same reason why so many Anzacs as well as the men of other nations lie in sandy graves


¹⁵ Downes, p.62; 'A Souvenir of New Zealand's Magnificent Atmospheric Theatre de Luxe, "The New Empire", Dunedin, September 21, 1928.' [Ephemera Collection, ATL]. See also MacKenzie, Orientalism, p.91; James Stevens Curl, Egyptomania, The Egyptian Revival: a Recurring Theme in the History of Taste, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994. Egyptomania, to use Curl's term, had a profound effect upon '...architecture, furniture design, interiors, jewellery, ceramics and ornament [most notably after the discovery of Tutankhamena's tomb] ...and gave its name to the style known as Art Deco...', p.xviii.

throughout the Middle East.'\textsuperscript{17} Indeed, as the editors of the \textit{NZEF Times} noted: '...the defence of New Zealand is wrapped up in the defence of the British Empire, that somewhere along the line Darwin, Singapore, India, Aden, the Suez Canal and Egypt ...is the real defence of New Zealand, So in 1941, as in 1914, we are in Egypt.'\textsuperscript{18}

Just as they had been in Australia, Ceylon and South Africa, the New Zealanders were received in Egypt as tourists, and the tourist industry readily adapted itself to the new arrivals. In World War One, the Anzacs had been greeted with advertisements offering them a ‘Squar Dinkum Feed’ and assuring would-be customers ‘Australians Done Here’,'\textsuperscript{19} and it was not uncommon for the soldier-tourists of 2(NZ) Division to be offered goods and services ‘...special for Kiwis, no Taranaki bullshit....'\textsuperscript{20} Later, when the Division moved to Syria ‘...where we might be expected to be unknown we were greeted with the familiar cry of “Hullo Kiwi”.'\textsuperscript{21}

...when the news came that the New Zealanders were arriving, prices in Cairo went up. We are known as the “millionaire army” here, and we get L.E.1 (£1 Egyptian) per week! I’d hate to be poor! ...I was reading in the paper here some time ago that the arrival of the NZ’s [sic] was the life saver of the gharry’s [sic]. The taxis had starved these horse coaches off the road almost, then along comes us and finds these gharrys [sic] so novel that there are as many gharrys on the road as taxis now. Another article went on to say that the local people were complaining because the taxi and gharry fares had gone up since the NZ’s arrived.'\textsuperscript{22}

Not all New Zealanders identified themselves with tourists, and consequently were not appreciative of this reception. Hugh Raine of 16 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, complained: ‘I

\textsuperscript{17} John Brown Hood, ‘Accounts and related papers relating to leave in Palestine and Syria’, p.1, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{NZEF Times}, Monday June 30 1941, p.2. This identification with British imperial interests was, in Richard White’s opinion, also a factor in Australian perceptions of Egypt during World War One. See Richard White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.50. For a discussion of New Zealand’s inter-war defence planning, see McIntyre, \textit{New Zealand Prepares for War}. The Suez canal was a ‘...vital line of communication for New Zealand...’ and was considered to be one of four main areas of interest to New Zealand (outside of Europe) in a paper prepared by the British Chiefs of Staff for the New Zealand government in 1931. McIntyre, p.118.

\textsuperscript{19} Thornton, p.43.

\textsuperscript{20} Slatter, p.64.

\textsuperscript{21} Kennedy to family, 28 February 1942, MS Papers 1449, folder 1, ATL.

wonder how long it will take them [the Egyptians] to realise that the tourist trade has ceased for the time being and also that soldiers are not millionaires', 23 while Robert Smith, a Warrant Officer with 22 Battalion, wrote that '[t]he tourist trade is non-existant [sic] at present and the ordinary soldier is the only source of revenue.' 24

Despite such objections, as in World War One, circumstances could conspire to convince the soldiers that they were in fact tourists. 25 From their base camp at Maadi, the New Zealanders were able to see the pyramids of Giza, probably the most familiar representation of Egypt as well as a popular tourist destination. The official history of 20 Battalion described the view from Maadi.

As far as the eye could see stretched limitless, sandy wastes. To the north frowned the Mokattam Hills; to the south rose terrace-like stony ridges surmounted by the circular stone structure of Napoleon’s fort; to the east ran rolling sandhills; while in the West, beyond the silver ribbon of the Nile, the pyramids of Giza stood out against the distant haze. 26

For Gordon Slater it was a sight that he had never experienced, and he sought comparisons not in places he knew, but in the cinema, the imagined world: ‘...the sight of the sun setting between the pyramids across the Nile looked unreal. It was a scene from a James E. Fitzpatrick travelogue or a painted backdrop in a cheap movie and equally incredible’, an analogy also used by Noel Chapman of 25 Battalion who likewise found Egypt ‘...just as one would see in a Fitzpatrick travel talk.’ 27

The members of 2(NZ) Division were, of course, not the only wartime ‘tourists’ to be captivated by the scenes before them. William Zinsser, a private in the United States’ army recalled his first impressions of Casablanca.

23 Raine to family, 13 July 1941, p.2, Micro MS 0578, ATL.
24 Smith to family, 5 September 1941, p.7, MS Papers 1701, folder 1, ATL.
26 Pringle and Glue, p.18.
I awoke to a landscape that has been with me ever since: a canvas of bold colours and exotic people. ...Outside the camp fence, Arabs were riding donkeys along a road from a nearby village. Their robes were as white as the houses, and I thought they had a dignity as ancient as Jerusalem. "It's just like the Bible!" we all exclaimed, using the cliché that springs to the lips of every American tourist upon sighting his first Arab on a donkey. But it was just like the Bible; the simple cliché merely enables us to express a complex emotion. This land looks older than any other land I've seen and it touches something deeper in me than I've felt in other places.28

The reaction of one member of 26 Battalion, however, encapsulated the feelings of many: 'I always pictured Egypt as sandy desert, a few palms and camels and of course the Pyramids and the Sphinx ...and [when] at last looming up in the sunset haze we saw the Geizeh [sic] Pyramids towering up - we felt that we really were in Egypt.'29 The pyramids were used as a reference point, a sight that could add an element of reality to an unreal situation, enabling the soldiers to make 'meaningful contact' as James Buzard describes it, with Egypt.

When visitors could say, 'yes that's Italy' or 'that's Paris' or ...[in this case "Yes, we really are in Egypt"]... - when, in other words, valued signs of these entities gathered from books, pictures, conversation, and other means of cultural preparation matched the scenes before them - they could feel that they had achieved meaningful contact with what these places essentially were....30

While undoubtedly endorsing this sort of contact, the authorities sought to restrict other varieties of 'meaningful contact'.

Assembled in the open-air cinema next morning we were briefed on hygiene and the rigours of "Gyppo tummy", how to conduct ourselves with the Egyptians, and not to think that because Egyptian men walked hand in hand occasionally that they were queers [sic]. The perils of the Berket [sic], the red-light district, and the risk of venereal disease were emphasised.31

The soldiers were given lectures on Egypt, its history and people, and were warned about the "...tropical diseases and other pitfalls of Egypt...",32 (which all troops, "...especially New

28 Zinsser, ‘The Gallery Revisited’, p.106. [Emphasis in the original]. Zinsser's account also illustrates a point made by Peter Downes (cited earlier) that in order to satisfy 'Eastern' convention '...correctness of locale was of no account'. Downes, p.62.

29 Collier, p.4, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/6, NA. This is an example of what Jonathan Culler describes as ‘...the interchangeability of signifier and signified...’ The pyramids, a tourist sight at one level, are at another level a marker for Egypt - signifying 'Egypt'. See Culler, 'The Semiotics of Tourism', p.166.

30 Bazard, p.10.

31 Blythe, p.15.

32 Pringle and Gruen, p.15.
Zealand troops, on their arrival in the country were very susceptible to...') leading the editors of Bab el Look, 24 Battalion's magazine, to comment wryly:

We had been warned about Egypt - in fact we were almost afraid to walk the streets for fear of contracting some dread disease, while the sight of a fly nearly made strong men faint.34

These were primarily lectures for the tourist as, with few exceptions, the New Zealanders did not see action immediately upon their arrival in Egypt. The Twentieth Battalion for example, found that ‘[d]uring the Battalion's first year in Egypt boredom and sickness [were] its enemies. It had yet to fire a shot at the enemy...’35 One consequence of this inactivity was an increase in ill-discipline. ‘No unit is altogether free from crime...’, admitted the authors of the battalion's official history, ‘...which is a harsh name under which to classify the misdemeanours of men intent often only on enjoying their leave...’ A significant proportion of men in this battalion found themselves ‘on the mat’ during their first year in Egypt and the most common charges were AWOL (being absent without leave), drunkenness, absence from parade and ‘conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline.’36 It would appear that for many of the New Zealanders military duties were, as they had been for an earlier generation of Antipodeans in the First World War, an ‘...annoying intrusion into the larger purpose of seeing the world...’, and this tourist outlook could be seen in the way they viewed the issue of leave.37 ‘[F]irst glimpse of this city for most of the other rein[orcements]...’, recorded the diary of one member of 4 Field Ambulance. ‘Plainly they were delighted with it - several men jump off trucks ahead, for French leave. They have heard that we are to stop at Amiriya tonight and they will find their own way to camp sometime.’38 Being absent without leave (taking ‘French leave’) and overstaying leave were common offences, reflecting more a desire to see Egypt and the Middle East 'properly' than any conscious desire to avoid duty.39 Particularly in the early stages of the war, many men availed themselves of any opportunity to 'expand their horizons', both figuratively and literally.

33 Stout, New Zealand Medical Services in the Middle East and Italy, p.43.
34 Bab el Look, 15 January 1941, p.6. [DLW].
35 Pringle and Glue, p.35.
36 Ibid.
37 White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.53.
39 This is demonstrated by the courts martial figures for 2NZEF. Throughout the war, only 179 New Zealand soldiers were convicted of battle discipline offences such as desertion, refusal to go into action or being AWOL with the intention of avoiding front-line service, McLeod, p.62.
From Amiriya leave parties went by truck to Alexandria, and from one of these trips ...[two men] failed to return. ...However, both returned a week later after having made an unauthorised trip around the Mediterranean in the cruiser Gloucester. Their behaviour had been good and they had a letter from the ship testifying to this.40

When the New Zealanders went on leave, just as had been the case in the previous war, it was as tourists rather than soldiers returning home from the war for a brief respite. With the exception of those included in the furlough schemes, leave did not entail returning home and the opportunity of seeing family and friends. Instead, for many in 2(NZ) Division, leave meant following the tourist trail, seeing the same sights, consulting the same guides and guidebooks, posing for the same photos and making the same comments in their diaries and correspondence home as other tourists had before them.41 The army itself was active in catering for the latent tourist among its ranks, producing, for example, the Services Guide to Cairo (which devoted a section to ‘Tours and Excursions’) and a guide to entertainment and accommodation for troops in Cairo.42 Route marches were conducted past points of interest, while the NZEF Times, the Division’s official newspaper, carried articles and advertisements which catered for its tourist readers. ‘Snap your travels...’ it urged, ‘Photography makes your travels more interesting because even the most commonplace sight may be the subject of an excellent snap....’43 In order to get ‘excellent snaps’ the troops were encouraged to take a tour. ‘Peace-Time Tourists [as opposed to war-time tourists which by implication were what the New Zealanders were...’, the NZEF Times assured its readers, ‘...Spend Thousands for this trip. Now for the outlay of a few pounds it is possible for you to visit Luxor and Assouan [sic] and see the ruins of Ancient Egypt.’44 For a smaller outlay, the New Zealanders could participate in a number of ‘Official 2NZF Trips and Tours’, the details of which were posted in the YMCA or the Trips and Tours office at Maadi Camp. Indeed, so popular were these trips and tours that many soldiers wrote home, as John Kennedy did, requesting additional funds to supplement their army pay: ‘...would you please send me £15 - there seems to be many trips available - I may as well have something up my sleeve for emergencies.’45 Lectures and informative talks were also given on topics of historical interest and the Education and Rehabilitation Service produced a number of guidebooks on Egypt and the principal cities and countries the Division visited.

40 Pringle and Glue, pp.26-27.
41 White, ‘The Soldier as Tourist’, pp.67-68.
43 NZEF Times, 2, 82, Monday 18 January 1942, p.2.
44 ibid., 2, 77, Monday December 14, 1942, p.11.
45 Kennedy to family, 20 October 1941, MS Papers 1449, folder 2, ATL.
TRIPS AND TOURS
GOLDFHABER TOURS
PROGRAMME FOR JANUARY 1942

Saturday 3rd.: Citadel and Mosques.
Visiting Citadel with Mosque and Palace of Mohamed Aly, Panoramic view of
Cairo. Sultan Hassan Mosque and Ibn Tuloun Mosque; traversing native quarters
and visiting the Bazars.
Maadi: Fare P.T. 25. Leaving 1330 hrs.

Sunday 4th.: Fayoum (whole day trip).
Libyan Desert and Oasis trip visiting; Pyramid of Hawara, Labyrinth, Irrigation
System of Oasis and city of Fayoum. Then on to Lake Karoun.
Lunch and afternoon tea provided. Take your water-bottle filled.
Maadi: Fare P.T. 85. Leaving 0730 hrs.

Friday 9th—Monday 12th.: Luxor and Aswan (week-end trip)
(additional information is found in a separate circular)
Leave Maadi 1800 hrs., on Friday 9th.
Return to camp on Monday 12th at 0600 hrs approx.
To make the necessary arrangements for this trip Names have to be handed in
to Orderly Rooms by 0900 hrs on Thursday 1st. and payments or deposits
have to be made on Friday 2nd. at V.M.C.A. between 1600 and 2000 hrs.
Maadi: Fares 3rd class P.T. 410, 2nd class P.T. 640.

Saturday 17th.: Zoo and Heliopolis.
Visiting: Zoological gardens; Mataria: Obelisk, The Virgin's Church and
Virgin's Tree where the Holy Family rested during their flight to Egypt. Passing
through Old and Modern Heliopolis, and by the Chateau of Baron Empain.
Maadi: Fare P.T. 25. Leaving 1330 hrs.

Sunday 18th.: Memphis and Sakkarah.
Visiting: Ruins of Memphis, Colossi of Ramses II, Alabaster Sphinx, And at
Sakkarah: Seraphum or tombs of the Sacred Bulls and Tomb of Ti, with view
of the Step Pyramid.
Maadi: Fare P.T. 25. Leaving 1330 hrs.

Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th. Alexandria (week end trip)
Visiting: Pompey's Pillar, Seraphum, Catacombs, Nuzha, and Antoniades gardens
Passing: Ras el Tin Palace, Mahmoudieh canal, the world famous Corniche
site of Ancient Pharos, Fort of Kait Bey.
Note: For this trip names have to be handed in to Orderly Rooms on Tuesday
20th and fares have to be paid on Wednesday 21st. at V.M.C.A. Between
1600 and 2000 hrs.
Maadi: Fares: 3rd class P.T. 195, 2nd class P.T. 270, 1st class P.T. 360.
Leaving 0545 hrs. Saturday 24th.

P.T.O.

Figure 7 - '2N.Z.E.F. Trips and Tours. Goldhaber Tours'. Advertisement
(Armstrong Collection)
By necessity, leave also entailed entering for sustained periods what Mary Louise Pratt has termed the 'contact zone':

...the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict.\textsuperscript{46}

This process of establishing 'ongoing relations' was further complicated by the fact that as tourists, the members of 2(NZ) Division (like the Australians of 1AIF and the New Zealanders of 1NZEF) were there '...to see the sights, not the people. There was no identification with or sympathy for the people, no admiration, even a sentimentally romantic admiration for their way of life. ...Once the sights were exhausted, there was no way left of relating to the people....'\textsuperscript{47} Initially, the locals were sights in their own right, or at the least, necessary extras in scenes the New Zealanders had expected to see. Clarence Hawkins, a gunner with 1NZEF, had found Cairo's bazaars and the people around them to be '[e]xactly like you see Eastern bazaars in pictures' and the 'tourists' of 2(NZ) Division were also gratified to see that the population conformed to their ideas of the 'East'.\textsuperscript{48}

That trip through cultivations where buildings, animals and costumes gave validity to half-forgotten Sunday School cards, the ones with a text on one side and a picture on the other, was engrossingly interesting; it led through stretches of sandy waste needing only a pyramid and a couple of camels to fit the troops' preconceived notion of a desert.\textsuperscript{49}

The New Zealanders were given information about 'racial types' they would encounter, complete with a brief description of their history, customs and 'physical type' so that they might be able to distinguish one group from another. In order to aid the troops in their 'type-seeing', rudimentary sketches were also sometimes added to guidebooks.\textsuperscript{50}

The problem here, as it had been for the tourists of 1AIF and others, was '...that the Egyptians refused to be merely the passive objects of the tourist gaze. They had to be dealt with, negotiated with, given backsheesh...'.\textsuperscript{51} It was a problem encountered by other troops in North Africa in their dealings with the local populations. World War Two U.S. serviceman William Zinsser, for example, found that:

\textsuperscript{47} White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.55.
\textsuperscript{48} Clarence Hawkins, diary, Sunday 9 January 1916, 'Diary of Clarence Albany Hawkins', MS Papers 1439, folder 1, ATL.
\textsuperscript{49} J.F. Cody, \textit{New Zealand Engineers, Middle East}, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1961, pp.8-9.
\textsuperscript{50} See for example, Ch. IV, 'Racial Types and Population', in G. Blake Palmer, \textit{Libya and Tunisia}, Education Rehabilitation Service 2NZEF, 1944(?), pp.24-28.
\textsuperscript{51} White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.56.
The Arabs quickly lost their biblical dignity. They ran alongside our train and pestered us for cigarettes and clothes and C-rations. My fellow GIs called them “Ayrabs” from the first. I was a purist, college-educated; I would hold the line and call them Arabs. On the second day, like everybody else, I was calling them Ayrabs. I soon stopped thinking of them as picturesque...\(^52\)

It was a process involving what Edward Said has termed ‘cultural resistance.’ ‘Never was it the case that the [in this case, tourist] ...encounter pitted an active Western intruder against a supine or inert non-Western native...’ for, as Said argues (as cited previously), there was inevitably some form of opposition.\(^53\)

It is difficult to gauge the extent and nature of this ‘opposition’ to the New Zealanders and to the other troops in Egypt. In his article, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, Richard White points out the invisibility of the Egyptians themselves in the tourist exchange; yet he never explores the idea of an exchange, choosing instead to ignore the agency of the Egyptians in much the same way as the Australian troops in his study appear to have done.\(^54\) There are, of course, obvious limitations imposed by sources in exploring the Egyptians’ responses to the soldier-tourists of either world war (limitations which have not, as yet, been successfully overcome), but it would appear from the complaints of the New Zealanders (and others) that tourism was a mutually exploitative relationship. Indeed, for Allan Doig, a member of 25 Battery, 4 Field Regiment:

They [Egyptians] were all the same ...all after their own welfare, trying to do us just as much as we were trying to do them financially. Wily Oriental Gentlemen describes them fairly well, except the “Gentlemen” is a bit over-rated.\(^55\)

It is an opinion which appears to have been a common one among the New Zealanders. ‘On our first leave in Cairo...’, recalled Jim Dangerfield, ‘...we were pestered by the native professional guides who, for a sum, would escort tourists around the sights and into the bazaars where visitors would be enticed to make purchases. The guide would get his backhander on every sale made.’\(^56\) Others had similar experiences.

We were still strange to Egypt so we needed a guide. We approached one at Bab el Louk (guides had a special armband) and he said he would show us the pyramids. He asked for money and I gave him a £1 note. That was my whole week's wages, a lot of money in the army. Well, he gave me back a great handful of Egyptian

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\(^{52}\) Zinsser, pp.106-107.

\(^{53}\) Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p.xii.


\(^{55}\) Allan Doig, interview, Dunedin, 29 June 1995.

\(^{56}\) Dangerfield, ‘Memories of “Hostilities Only”’, p.10.
money as change and I thought I was right, even though I did not know the value of the exchange. ...We discovered that all the change the ...wog had given to us as change for our tour fee amounted to only a few ackers...and was worth only a few cents. I learned the value of money very, very quickly and never forgot. It was the best thing that happened to me, because I was more careful after that, and I took the wog down every chance I got; I had that £1 back many, many times over.57

Egypt was ‘...one of the first societies in which tourism itself became an active force in social change’, so that by the time the New Zealand ‘tourists’ of 2(NZ) Division arrived in 1940, there was an infrastructure in place to facilitate tourism and the tourist.58 Egypt’s ‘entrepreneurial poor’ had welcomed tourists (or at least their money) before these New Zealanders arrived, and given Roderick Fell’s comments on ‘...“wogs” all shrieking out “Noo Zealandie verry goot!” and Gordon Slatter’s goods and services ‘...special for Kiwis’ they appear to have been quite capable of differentiating between the different nationalities now arriving.59 In Palace Walk Naguib Mahfouz describes the reactions of the members of one of Cairo’s merchant-class families to the various troops in Cairo during World War One. One of the characters in the novel ‘...began cursing the Australian troops who had spread through the city like locusts, destroying the land. ...He could not stand to expose himself to soldiers who openly plundered people of their possessions and took pleasure in abusing and insulting them without restraint.’60 In contrast, ‘Yasin’ (one of the merchant’s sons), after being thanked by a soldier for providing a match with which to light a cigarette:

...proceeded to the house almost reeling with joy. ...An Englishman, not an Australian or an Indian - had smiled at him and thanked him.... An Englishman - in other words, the kind of man he imagined to embody all the perfections of the human race. Yasin probably detested the English as all Egyptians did, but deep inside he respected and venerated them so much that he frequently imagined they were made from a different stuff than the rest of mankind.61

Given the higher rates of pay for New Zealand troops, there would have been obvious financial advantages to Egyptians in being able to identify the different nationalities and indeed, new arrivals from ‘veteran’ tourists. ‘The poorer Egyptian was a very cunning person [who] lived on his wits...’ wrote E.J. Osborne, ‘...and new soldiers were open game because these

59 Fell to family, 20 March 1941, p.1, MS Papers 1575, folder 2, ATL; Slatter, p.64. [Both cited earlier].
61 ibid., p.395.
unscrupulous chaps could pick us out with ease.' This could take many forms. Some were quite transparent; such as E. Hatoun's efforts to increase patronage at his store by issuing a small, complimentary booklet outlining some of Cairo's principal sights. 'I hope that the booklet will prove of use to Cairo's winter guests...' it read, while also assuring these guests that '...most notable tourists agree that there is nothing comparable to Hatoun's world-famed store and workshops.' Others, as Osborne suggested, were more cunning.

We paid 25 piastres to hire a horse to ride to the pyramids, but the "wog" would not let go of the reins until we gave him a tip. The distance travelled was only a quarter of what he claimed and there was another 12 piastres to be found for hire of a dragoman [guide]. ...[A] boy selling bottles of soft drinks pretended to take the tops off while making a hissing noise with his mouth, so we foolishly bought. This was an education day for us inexperienced rookies. We had been taken for a ride all day, and the day's 44 piastres (9 NZ shillings) spent was half our week's pay.64

While one can only speculate on the Egyptians' views of the New Zealand 'tourists' they encountered, it should be remembered throughout, that in their dealings with the New Zealanders - this 'tourist exchange' - the Egyptians were far from the passive, invisible 'hosts' portrayed in Richard White's work. For the New Zealanders, however, the agents of this 'opposition' - those on the other side of the tourist exchange - tended to be members of '...Cairo's vast population of entrepreneurial poor...' and, as had been the case a generation earlier, the Egyptians '...came to be viewed with universal contempt.'65 This contempt manifested itself in their actions and reactions towards the Egyptians, and in the re-creation of a harsh and unforgiving stereotype of the 'gyppo' or 'wog'.66 The reaction of the New Zealanders can be seen in an article which appeared in the NZEF Times. The article, which was a reprint of a letter to the RSA Review, was deemed to be '...one of the most representative selections of Middle East impressions...' that the editors had read.67

We landed here late one night in the middle of the black-out. Egypt has a population of 17 millions [sic], all of whom were at the station and called on me and Mike and Duggie and Allah to preserve them with piastres. Each called the other a robber and touted for a different hotel, pub, speakeasy, or moonshine factory. They offered us the wealth of Egypt in buckets, gourds, jam-tins, and baskets.... We pushed, fought and swore our way through the horde but it regathered for another attack.... Next morning we had grub and sauntered to the street. The saunter lasted as far as the bottom step and Bedlam broke loose. Cairo had camped on the doorstep and had started the morning devotions to the great god "Piastre." They pushed things in our hand, into our pockets, hung them on our

63 E. Hatoun, 'What Every Tourist Wishes to Know', pp.5, 20. [Armstrong Collection].
64 Osborne, p.14.
66 See White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.55.
67 NZEF Times, 2, 78, Monday December 21, 1942, p.11.
belts, or, if the article was supposed to be edible by anything from a camel upwards, they’d put it in our mouths. You could not ward them off as both hands were required to cover the pocket holding your money. After a while the novelty palled and we tried to ooze through. It was no good, so we became slightly annoyed. Two minutes later the annoyance became real and then we just went berserk.68

Others were more private in their contempt. ‘[I]n a barren waste, bugger all to do...’ wrote one soldier, ‘...with Wogs on every hand ready to cheat us for our last ‘acker. Egypt can keep its ancient traditions and everything it owns, I will be happy to say goodbye to it and forget I have ever seen it or its black bastards.’69

The explanation for this contempt lay in a number of inter-related factors. As tourists, the members of 2(NZ) Division shared with the Australians of 1AIF (and the New Zealanders of 1NZEF) a feeling that they had somehow been duped by Egypt or, in the words of 22 Battalion member Robert Smith, that they had ‘...been fleeced right and left.’70 Initially, Egypt was as the New Zealanders had anticipated.

Beyond the river were the Pyramids, which in the distance resembled surprisingly closely the picture postcards of Egypt commonly seen in bookshops in New Zealand. To nearly everyone Egypt at first glance was little different from what had been expected or imagined.71

Upon entering the contact zone, however, the New Zealanders were struck by the disjunction between their expectations or imagination and the ‘real’ Egypt. ‘Have been looking forward with some eagerness to my first day’s leave in Cairo...’, wrote Edmund White, a member of the 4th Reserve Mechanical Transport Company:

[Cairo] ...had always, in the past, conjured up visions of a beautiful blue river bounded by palm covered banks with the awe inspiring bulk of the Pyramids - a mystical Sphynx [sic] - voluptuous beauties and an Arab sheik [sic] and his fiery charger thrown in for good measure; - however ...[in Cairo] we were pounced upon by an extremely unsavoury assemblage of bootblacks, lemonade wallids [sic] and would-be guides.72

68 ibid.
70 Smith to family, 5 September 1941, p.7, MS Papers 1701, folder 1, ATL. See White. ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.55; See also Harold von Dadelszen to family, 1 August 1918, MS Papers 0588, ATL. von Dadelszen, a member of INZEF, wrote that the shopkeepers in Egypt were ‘...all greasy and thieves. They look on the soldier as a kind of Godsend and charge accordingly...’, p.22.
71 Frazer D. Norton, 26 Battalion, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1952, p.10. [My emphasis].
72 White, diary, 20 February 1940, p.20, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, ATL.
Not only were the cities a source of disappointment, in the countryside too, the New Zealanders felt that Egypt was failing to live up to their expectations. Stationed in the desert (‘out in the blue’ or ‘up the blue’), one soldier described the view from his tent. ‘Out of the tent I can see a native village which at this distance (one mile) looks quite romantic. [However] ...from close quarters it is not so pleasant.’

For many of the tourists of 2(NZ) Division this was a common experience. From a distance, that space between imagination and experience, Egypt conformed to their ideas of the ‘romantic East’, complete with picturesque scenes and people, but once it became necessary to traverse this distance and experience Egypt at close quarters, it was not so pleasant. As Anthony Sattin observed of the Allied forces in Egypt at the time:

It was wartime and they were away from home in a country where they were often not appreciated and where they did not speak the language, did not understand the customs, did not enjoy the climate, were often badly accommodated and badly treated; they were loud in their complaints. The local “colour” which had amused tourists for years was a source of irritation to them.

It was an observation shared by Major General W.G. Stevens in his study, *Problems of 2NZEF*.

...the irritating ways of the Egyptians have a lot to account for. To an occidental, the habits of the oriental, as seen in Egypt, were often amusing, but just as often infuriating. The New Zealand soldier, spending the evening in Cairo, or other Egyptian towns, would find the dirt and noise, stupidity and dilatoriness, bad drinks, blatant attempts to cheat, until the point was reached where there would be an explosion, which, at the best, might take the form of an attempt to wreck the place.

This process of disillusionment with Egypt began for some almost immediately upon their arrival in the country. Allan Doig recalled his arrival in Egypt. ‘I didn’t think much [of Egypt]. It was a new experience of course, a new thing and something completely different. Arrived there, wogs shouting and yelling at each other, and lifting their skirts and showing their private parts, and I thought, “Well, this is the place we’re coming to!”’ [It] ...summed up the Egyptian population so far as I can tell.’ For others, it was more than simply their first sight of Egypt and Egyptians which caused an unfavourable response.

73 W.B. Stewart, ‘Collection of letters written by servicemen in World War II’, p.14, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA.
74 Sattin, p.273.
75 Stevens, p.217.
76 Allan Doig, interview, Dunedin, 29 June 1995. [His emphasis].
The machine-gunned had time to study their surroundings before disembarking,...
Their first impressions were not very favourable. The Egyptian, while perhaps
sturdier than the Sinhalese of Colombo, seemed dirtier and more ragged.... The
town looked interesting at a distance but ...[a]t close quarters it was much less
attractive.77

What made Port Tewfik less attractive to the members of 27(MG) Battalion was the smell.
'Some officers who went ashore...', continued the Battalion History, '...were struck by the
...smell. We first whiffed it while on the boat and on land it became more pronounced but here
it was overpowering, ...a combination of over-ripe pigtsty plus Rotorua....'78 Others were
more succinct. 'My honest opinion of Cairo...', wrote John Westbrook, a member of 18
Battalion, '...is that it should have a fair dinkum earthquake to mop it up. It's foul and to be
more blunt - it stinks.'79

This preoccupation with the smells of Egypt reveals another aspect of the contempt in
which many of the New Zealanders held the Egyptian population.

Different odours are often ascribed to different social classes and ethnic groups in
the West.... Often ...a given ethnic or class odour is considered ...to be somehow
intrinsic to the group, a characteristic trait as inalterable as skin colour: ...It is
rarely one's own group which smells...it is always 'other people'. ...Rather than
a cause of ethnic antipathy, ...olfactory aversions are generally an expression of
it.80

Not only was their reaction to Egypt and in particular the Egyptians themselves generated
by their role as tourists, it was also in part, due to the New Zealanders' own conceptualisation
of race. The popular conventional racism of the day was naturally central to their view of
Egyptians, just had it had been in World War One and just as it is for us today; it could not be
otherwise.81

77 Robin Kay, 27 (Machine Gun) Battalion, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs,
1958, p.8.
78 ibid., pp.8-9.
79 Westbrook to sister, 22 March 1940, p.2, MS Papers 1407, folder 1, ATL. INZEF appear to have shared
this opinion, see Burton, p.21.
80 Constance Classen, David Howes and Anthony Synnott, Aroma: The cultural history of smell, London:
Routledge, 1994, p.165. For a further discussion of this relationship see ibid., Ch. 5., 'Odour and Power:
The Politics of Smell', pp.161-179. See also Alain Corbin, The Foul and the Fragrant: Odour and the
would like to thank Dr. Barbara Brooke for this reference].
81 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.56. See also Boyack, Behind the Lines. Boyack claims '...the hostility
[to Egyptians] had many causes, the chief reason was racism; the New Zealanders held strong notions of
racial superiority. Combined with this was the concept of Imperial duty (the White Man's burden)...', p.15.
This racism was, of course, not always expressed as contempt. It could lead to other races in different contexts being seen sympathetically.\textsuperscript{82} John Kennedy, for example, described Indian troops as ‘...magnificent specimens of manhood and as is fairly well known [they] are regarded as the Empire’s crack troops of this war’, while one unofficial historian of 5 Field Park Company described encountering black African troops in Syria. ‘There are several companies of Bechuanas in the area...’, he wrote, ‘[w]e, who have no colour bar and apply almost none to them, will perhaps be cursed by white South Africans for our attitude towards these happy-hearted blacks. ...None of us have anything but liking for the Bechy [sic] boys.’\textsuperscript{83} Likewise the staff at 3 General Hospital found the ‘Basutos’ to be ‘...grand specimens of men, tall, well-built with the muscles of a wrestler or gorilla’\textsuperscript{84} while Maori troops were described in glowing terms throughout the course of the war.

Their role as tourists also contained older overtones, demonstrating an inherent relationship between tourism and imperialism. As in Colombo and Capetown, the troops in Egypt were urged to display their best behaviour and set a good example for the native population.

Remember, when you’re in the East, Dig, that it is the greatest privilege to be a white man. ...It means that you are not much lower than God to a few million dark skinned humans. Don’t let them down, Dig, - or your own folks.\textsuperscript{85}

Their imperial role was demonstrated in a number of situations. In \textit{Living It Again}, E.J. Osborne recounts his involvement in the British reassertion of authority in Egypt, an event which demonstrated lingering British imperial pretensions in Egypt.

A surprise order came when camp units were told to stand by, fully dressed and armed. We thought it was a practice show, but learnt that there was a government upheaval in Egypt - King Farouk was leaning against the British so troops patrolled Cairo. ... Tanks and artillery were parked outside the King’s palace, and the British ambassador presented papers for him to sign.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{82} White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.56.

\textsuperscript{83} Kennedy to family, 26 December 1941, MS Papers 1449, folder 1, ATL; L. Macfarlane, 6 May 1942, ‘Brief History of 5 NZ Field Park Company, May - August 1942’, p.2, WA II, Series 1, DA 38/15/1, NA.


\textsuperscript{86} Osborne, p.19. [Interestingly, another member of 2(NZ) Division ascribed the whole incident to General Freyberg and the New Zealand Division, perhaps indicating not only an acceptance of imperial authority but also a willingness to enforce it. Bob Finlay, interview, Dunedin, 5 February 1996]. For other accounts of the New Zealanders’ involvement see R. Walker, ‘War Narrative, 2 NZ Division’, p.5, WA II, Series 1, DA.
Informally, too, the New Zealanders proved capable of playing the imperial role, a role for which they had been prepared. John M. MacKenzie has demonstrated how '...the role of Britain as a world power deriving from its unique imperial status continued to be projected to the British public after the First World War. Victory in war had confirmed rather than diminished that status....' There is ample evidence to suggest that New Zealand shared this vision.

Those children who attended the primary schools of New Zealand between 1907 and about 1931 were exposed to a thorough presentation of not only the central beliefs of this imperial ideology but also a mass of supporting material, and other means of indoctrination.... This group would have provided the bulk of servicemen for both world wars....

In Cairo, according to one New Zealander, the local population were '...a lot of rogues. They tell new soldiers by the colour of their knees. One urchin spilt black muck over one of Bob’s boots and then wanted an acker to clean it. The correct thing to do is boot the boy’s backside and cleaning outfit, then walk on.' Bootblacks were not the only members of Egypt’s population to be taught civilised behaviour, the 'correct' things to do.

We went out with the intention of attending a cabaret but as we were getting into a gharrie ... a dirty wog picked my pocket - a wallet with £4/10/-, stamps, photos, letters, and other articles and made off. I gave chase, but with a few beers aboard, lost him in the maze of traffic. The boys saw him later and followed him into a building, came back and informed me. Two of us went up and took the place apart. Couldn’t find the thief anywhere.... I got some money back for my troubles, £5. Ten shillings more than the wallet contained. So we went back into the street again....

401.2/2, NA. New Zealanders also took part in a similar display of British imperial power in Egypt during World War One, see Boyack, *Behind the Lines*, p.21.


89 Stewart, p.58, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA. [Many of those interviewed for this thesis recalled very similar incidents to this, and also reacted in a similar way to that above - although, admittedly, this may have been justified on occasion. See for example, Allan Doig, interview, Dunedin 29 June 1995].

90 Stewart, pp.64-65, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA.
Dispensing justice to the 'dirty wogs' (for of course there were no clean 'wogs' in Egypt), awarding punishments and seeking recompense for the wronged, were all elements of this imperial response to Egypt and Egyptians. Improving civilised values often required such direct measures, and the New Zealanders' behaviour and attitudes were very reminiscent of those of an earlier generation of Antipodeans.\footnote{White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.57. See also Thornton, \textit{With the ANZACS in Cairo}. Thornton, a Chaplain-Captain to 1NZEF recorded that 'It has always afforded me the keenest pleasure to administer well-deserved physical chastisement to members of this unholy and numerous profession ['touts' or 'pimps']...', p.83.} Divisional Headquarters recorded a number of complaints about the New Zealanders' behaviour, including incidents involving assaults on Cairo's civilian police force, threats against taxi drivers and shopkeepers, attempted extortion, robbery and theft, and "...striking passers-by wantonly..." with fists and pieces of wood.\footnote{Discipline, 2/6/42 - 30/6/43', HQ 2 NZ Division (A+Q Branch), WA II, Series 1, DA 21.1/9/7/5 Part 1, NA.} John McLeod in \textit{Myth and Reality} outlines a number of incidents, all of which occurred in a single night, comprising such acts as '...walking down the street slapping faces, preventing Egyptians from climbing on buses by pushing or punching them, and jostling them in the street.'\footnote{McLeod, p.131.} Divisional Petrol Company's official history, too, made mention of the troops' behaviour towards Egyptians.

His red fez of tarboosh, symbol of his faith, fascinated our troops, and often they would swipe one while swishing past in taxicab or gharry. Such acts enveled stem words in routine orders, and harsh threats against those who "molested or interfered in any manner whatever with natives of any class, colour or creed."\footnote{A.L. Kidson, \textit{Petrol Company}, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1961, pp.38-39.} Such warnings, it appears, were generally ignored; for as a field security report in September 1941 noted, the New Zealanders' view of the Egyptians was '..."one of contempt and it is feared that little could be done to alter it"'.\footnote{Cited in McLeod, p.131.}

While the New Zealanders appeared more than capable of assuming an imperial identity, they were equally capable of asserting their own national identity in the face of imperial authority, as the evidence of one member of the British Corps Military Police (the infamous 'Red Caps') demonstrates. Attending an incident in Cairo involving one member of 23 Battalion, the policeman was warned by the New Zealander to:
...“Keep away from me you Pommy bastard; I’m going to break every window in Cairo, a wog has pinched my paybook and seven pounds ten shillings and I am going to get a couple of wogs for it.” Whilst conducting him [the New Zealander] to Bab-El-Hadid Barracks he shouted to two civilians, “Get off the pavement you Dirty Black Bastards.” I ordered him to control his language whereupon he remarked, “Who the fucking hell are you giving orders to you fucking Pommy.”  

The incident illustrates a point well made by David McIntyre: ‘Imperialism was ...a form of nationalism. ...[I]n the very act of demonstrating solidarity with Britain, New Zealand could be found asserting its individual identity in various ways.’ It would appear that Richard White is quite correct in his observation that ‘[t]he boundaries of the Other are always rather vague’, and in this case, also quite fluid.

There was also considerable overlap between the tourist and imperial identities of the New Zealanders in their attitudes to dirt and hygiene in Egypt. They appear to have shared an obsession with conditions in Egypt with their predecessors in 1NZEF and with the Australian troops in Richard White’s study; for, as Timothy Mitchell has demonstrated, dirt has been an integral part of Europeans’ perceptions of Egypt. Indeed, the Egyptian exhibit at the World Exhibition, held in Paris in 1889, contained a representation of a winding street of Cairo - and was deliberately made chaotic and dirty. So carefully was this done, that one disgusted Egyptian visitor to the exhibition commented: ‘...“even the paint on the buildings was made dirty”.’

The New Zealanders also found dirt and disorder wherever they looked.

...the people here, the lower castes, are a filthy rabble. The men wear long robes, burnouses, fez or turbans on their heads, and look as if they’ve never had a bath in all their sweet lives. It’s these chaps who have not the faintest idea of personal hygiene and sanitation. Looking out of the window we saw hundreds of them walking into the town and there among all that crowd there were one or two squatting unconcernedly in full view of everyone....

Certainly the New Zealanders were aware of the ‘dangers’ of Egypt, having received numerous lectures from the medical staff, both before and after their arrival in Egypt. Medical matters were also given prominence in unit routine orders which included: ‘...the prohibition, because

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97 McIntyre, ‘Imperialism and Nationalism’, p.342. [Although in the above example, this demonstration of ‘solidarity’ with Britain was only in its broadest meaning].
98 White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.50.
99 ibid., pp.57-59. See also G.A. Robbie, diary, MS Papers 1380, folder 1, ATL; Spenceley Walker, ‘Cairo’, The New Zealand School Journal, part 3, 20, 8 (September 1926), p.245.
101 ibid., p.1.
102 Ngaa to family, 5 March 1941, p.29, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.
of bilharzia, of bathing in the Nile or wading in any canal or pool, warnings against sunbathing and tattooing, the precautions to be taken against contracting chills, and the holding of regular shower parades.’

To this could also be added a number of other warnings, neatly summarised in one official history as ‘...the three F’s - Flies, Fluids, and Food...’ (although a fourth, colloquial ‘F’ might also be included here).

As it turned out, the incidence of gastro-intestinal disease was lower than was expected; the number of admissions to hospital for dysentery, for example, peaking at 255 in November 1941. Indeed, much of the initial sickness suffered by the troops in Egypt was due to diseases they had brought from New Zealand. There were, initially, mild epidemics of both influenza and rubella, while the 5th and 7th Reinforcements, in particular, had numerous cases of mumps and of measles. This did not, however, alter the views of the soldiers themselves on the dangers of Egypt’s dirt and disease.

Saw a wog drinking out of it [the Nile], as they all do the dirty wretches. If we swallow even a mouthful by accident we have to be inoculated with 5 or 6 different serums, but of course, they are immune from the germs that would kill us in a few days.

This obsession with dirt and hygiene was rooted in a whole cluster of ideas about national efficiency, racial fitness and the supposed deleterious effects of urban living, ideas which had dominated New Zealand thought since the turn of the century. Embryonic national consciousness had combined with these ideas to produce an image of an untainted and healthy New Zealand, an image which was believed to have been validated by the performance of New Zealand troops in both the Boer War and the First World War. Yet as Margaret Tennant has demonstrated, the high rejection rate among both volunteers and conscripts for New Zealand’s armed forces in World War One dealt a blow to those who eulogised the merits of New Zealand.

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103 Stout, *New Zealand Medical Services in the Middle East and Italy*, p.45. [Bilharzia is caused by a parasitic flatworm].

104 Kidson, p.30.

105 T. Duncan M. Stout, *War Surgery and Medicine*, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1954, p.492. [Although elsewhere, he claims that the highest incidence of dysentery was in April 1940 when 14 per 1000 were admitted to hospital, Stout, *New Zealand Medical Services in the Middle East and Italy*, p.81.]

106 Stout, *New Zealand Medical Services in the Middle East and Italy*, pp.79, 230.

107 Collier, Monday 25 August 1941, p.9, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/6, NA.


Zealand’s ‘pioneering’ lifestyle when compared to the decadence and decay of the old world.\textsuperscript{110} Although World War One challenged the mythology of the benefits for race and empire of the New Zealand lifestyle, the effects of the war and the influenza epidemic of 1918 ensured that health became ‘...the leading focus of social policy.’\textsuperscript{111} Not only were government policy and thinking affected, but in the nation’s homes too, there was a greater awareness of health issues.

\ldots[I]t has been suggested that the recruitment of some 50 per cent of New Zealand men of military age into the New Zealand armed forces during World War One may have promoted a more widespread consciousness about health and hygiene among the male population. Improvements in hygiene were also aided by technological changes in the interwar period which meant that it was easier to keep clean. The extension of a piped water supply, of electrical hot water heating, and even such basics as cheaper manufactured soap may have meant that cleanliness became a more realistic goal than in the past.\textsuperscript{112}

There were of course other developments which contributed to the growing public consciousness about health issues, including the rise of the health professional, the emphasis placed upon children’s health and welfare, and the acknowledgement of the need for adequate housing and sanitation in New Zealand’s growing urban centres.\textsuperscript{113} All of these factors contributed to the New Zealanders’ perceptions of dirt and disease in Egypt. Mary Douglas has argued, ‘...dirt is essentially disorder ...[i]t offends against order. Eliminating it is not a negative movement, but a positive effect to organise the environment.’\textsuperscript{114} For Mary Douglas, argues Bryan Turner, ‘...the body is an important source of metaphor about the organisation of society. [In his analysis of her work] ...[d]isorganised bodies express social disorganisation.’\textsuperscript{115} In an increasingly regulated, organised and bureaucratised New Zealand, it was therefore little wonder that the members of 2(NZ) Division reacted as they did to the dirt and disorder of Egypt.


\textsuperscript{111} Tennant, ‘“Missionaries of Health”’, p.131.

\textsuperscript{112} Tennant, \textit{Children’s Health}, p.67. [Emphasis in the original].


Egypt also offended against order in other ways. As an earlier Australian traveller to Egypt had observed, ‘...East and West meet here and corrupt each other.’\textsuperscript{116} For the members of 2(NZ) Division, Egypt would ‘corrupt’ in a number of ways.

By long tradition the Orient and particularly Egypt had been identified with sexual licence. As sex was increasingly institutionalised and ‘put into discourse’ in the West, the oriental woman became a bourgeois fantasy, combining promise and threat, innocence and experience, delicacy and coarseness, mind and flesh, a fantasy which offered sexual experiences unobtainable - unimaginable - at home.\textsuperscript{117}

The Australians and New Zealanders of both wars were not generally well versed in the orientalist literature of Europe, although the presence of so many Anzacs in Egypt in the First World War had no doubt added to the images and other means of ‘cultural preparation’ with which the members of 2(NZ) Division formed their ideas of Egypt. However, the persuasiveness and longevity of the ‘sensual orient’ ensured that for many New Zealanders, Egypt continued to be a land of harems, eunuchs, veils and belly dancers.\textsuperscript{118}

Leave trips to Cairo and the Delta gave opportunities to examine more closely the “wonders of the East,” [Divisional] Petrol Company investigations were not all purely academic.... Like their fathers before them they revelled in the fleshspots of Egypt...[while]...for the more opulent there were lush precincts where (while money lasted) one could sample “the magic of the Arabian Nights, the sport of Sultans”.\textsuperscript{119}

Furthermore, as Richard White has argued of IAIF: ‘This romance of oriental sensuality takes on special significance in the context of the troops’ own understanding of their masculinity. ...The war generally was seen as a test of their manhood. ...They were becoming men at the very time they were constructing oriental women,’\textsuperscript{120} a process which as Jock Phillips has argued, was not merely restricted to First World War Australian troops, but applied equally to New Zealanders of both wars.\textsuperscript{121}

Many of the New Zealanders were initially captivated by the image of oriental women. Some, like R.T. Street, wrote home describing the women they had encountered. ‘[T]he little


\textsuperscript{118} White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.59.

\textsuperscript{119} Kidson, pp.38-39.

\textsuperscript{120} White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.59.

Arab bint with the charming smile and lovely, looked very attractive...’, he wrote, but, as was so often the case for the New Zealanders in Egypt, experience ruined imagination. The sensual orient was corrupted by dirt and disease. ‘Every soldier in Egypt has heard of the Berker [sic]...', declared Francis Jackson in Passage to Tobruk. ‘The street, and the filthy houses in it, has a revolting, unclean atmosphere, the sort of thing that goes against the grain for the boys who are used to the clean surroundings of homes in New Zealand.’

For numerous New Zealand soldiers, the ‘Berker’ (the Sharia Wagh El Birket, a street in the heart of the brothel area of Cairo) was their only ‘real’ contact with the sensual orient of their imagination. For some, the dirt and squalor of the brothels did not detract from their tourist vision, indeed, the brothels became a sight in their own right.

Later in the day we went into the brothel area. Everybody did. It was the pièce de résistance and well worth the visit, even if we were only looking and not buying.

A number, of course, did not restrict themselves to ‘only looking’, and for these men, it was venereal disease which could ruin the sensual orient.

If statistics are any indication, as John McLeod points out, ‘...the innocence of many men was shortlived. In one week in July 1941, 2164 New Zealanders used their preventative ablution centre (PAC) in the Berka after visiting the brothels there...’ Venereal disease was a problem throughout the war. The 2NZEF rate per 1000 men in Egypt during 1940, for example, ranged between 7.8% in March and 3.29 in December. In comparison, during the first few months of 1NZEF’s stay in Egypt, ‘...an average of 100 men out of a force of approximately 8500 were hospitalised each month with VD.’ The lower rate for 2NZEF reflected not only advances in the treatment of venereal disease, particularly the development of sulphonamides and later, penicillin, but also advances in attitude towards treatment.

As a result of a forceful report submitted by the Director-General of Medical Services...to War Cabinet, venereal disease was treated in a sane and reasonable manner. The policy was almost revolutionary compared with the First World War precautions of barbed-wire enclosures and armed guards for such patients. ...The attitude of the DGMS...was that nothing would be accomplished by treating as criminals those troops who contracted venereal disease, and that too harsh a policy would discourage infected soldiers from reporting early and openly for treatment. ...The educational approach was also used extensively and medical officers gave lectures to troops on the dangers of promiscuous sexual intercourse. This campaign, combined with plans on a broader basis for keeping men interested in

122 Jackson, p.97.
123 Blythe, p.17.
124 McLeod, p.132.
126 Boyack, Behind the Lines, pp.139-140.
healthy physical and mental diversions during off-duty hours, more than justified itself in the relatively low incidence of venereal disease.\textsuperscript{127}

Throughout nearly all of these sexual encounters, however, the women (and sometimes men) themselves remained invisible; after all, as it has been argued, the New Zealanders were sight-seers and therefore not interested in the locals unless they constituted ‘sights’ themselves. The objectifying nature of the soldier-tourists’ vision is apparent in some of the fiction generated by the war. In \textit{For the Rest of Our Lives}, one of Dan Davin’s characters, ‘Bill’, asks: ‘Do these black bastards think a man’s going to sit for months out there in the bloody rotten desert defending their stinking rotten country and then not have a bit of bint when he comes back?’\textsuperscript{128} Likewise, ‘Curly’ tells how he and two mates got drunk and made a deal with an Egyptian street-vendor: for a sum of money she would have sex with each of them in a café toilet. Curly then recalls:

...after I sort of came to myself and found myself there in that stinking hole with that dirty wog bint I felt absolutely disgusted. ...Fancy a girl taking on three jokers like that just for the sake of a few measly ackers. It shows she just had no decency in her at all. I was so wild with her ...that I got her by the throat ...and I bloody near strangled her.\textsuperscript{129}

The prostitutes, both amateur and professional, were merely objects to be viewed, used or abused. Only on very rare occasions were there attempts to go behind the scenes, to ‘penetrate’ Egypt in other ways. One such attempt was an interview with one of the ‘Berka’ prostitutes conducted by members of the Archives Department of the Public Relations Service. ‘Her name was Elisabeth - Elisabeth Swa’adi. She was 21, and a Christian Arab - Roman Catholic - born in Damascus. She was undeniably attractive’ they confessed, ‘...despite the pouches under her eyes; clear olive skin, regular features, lustrous eyes, white even teeth, jet black hair ...an intelligent, pensive expression, ...a good figure.’ Her mother had died while she was very young and her drunken father had married her off to an abusive husband when she was just 13. Abandoned by her husband, she had found work as a barmaid until wartime restrictions forced her to find other employment, ‘...and so she became one of the 421 girls of the Berka.’ Her transformation from the object of the tourist gaze to a person, complete with name and personal history, created difficulties. ‘Just another member of the oldest profession in the world...’, wrote the archivists. ‘...it was difficult to think of her like that.’\textsuperscript{130} Once again, the need to negotiate, to deal with the Egyptians as people created difficulties for the tourists, even more so

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127} Stout, \textit{New Zealand Medical Services in the Middle East and Italy}, pp.29-30.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Dan Davin, \textit{For the Rest of Our Lives}, London: Michael Joseph, 1947, pp.165-166.
\item \textsuperscript{129} ibid., pp.361-362. See also Jensen, Talk 3, ‘Bints, Sweethearts, Wives and Whores’, p.28,
\item \textsuperscript{130} Sgt. L.B. Sandford,’ The Berka: Some authentic information about the area in Cairo in which the authorised military brothels were situated’, WA II, Series 1, DA 447.23/2, NA.
\end{itemize}
Figure 8 - 'Sharia Wagh el Birket Cairo', 1940. (G.W. Dudding. War History Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ C6713)
when it became apparent that the undifferentiating nature of the ‘tourist gaze’ was reciprocal.131 ‘What soldiers did she prefer? ...With a disdainful smile, she said that passion made them all the same, and they were all the same when drunk.’132

Part of this invisibility of Egyptian women was also literal. ‘A lot of the women wear veils...’, explained John Westbrook, ‘...the only part of their face you see is their eyes,’133 The veil was a powerful image of the Orient in general. It was an image which in many ways also represented Egypt itself. Egypt too was veiled to the outsider, difficult to understand or penetrate and whose true nature could only be imagined, the subject of fantasy. It was, like Dan Davin’s description of Egyptian women, enhancing their charms by keeping them concealed.134 There are perhaps reasons for this eroticisation of Egypt. In her discussion of nineteenth century constructions of sex and race Joanna de Groot argues that traditionally, the ‘Otherness’ of the Orient - which was central to westerners’ concepts of the Orient, (it was what they were not) - was expressed in terms that were both racial / cultural and profoundly sexual. White’s ‘bourgeois fantasy’, and its associated images of sexual licence, veils, polygamy and harems, is evidence of this conception of the ‘Otherness’ of the Orient, and contains items which, as de Groot also points out, were still evident in later twentieth century representations of the Orient.135 Furthermore, de Groot claims the Orient was characterised as essentially ‘feminine’:

The use of the phrase “mysterious Orient”, like “mysterious female”, indicated that both were seen as hard for western men to understand; references to the irrationality and emotional extremes to which “orientals” were inclined carried the implied comparison with similar tendencies to women. More generally, the Orient, like women, is discussed by western men in terms of its actual or potential susceptibility or need for their control and authority....136

The New Zealanders’ need to control Egypt, Kai Jensen argues, came from their own powerlessness. ‘Soldiers stand in a relation of feminized helplessness both to the dangers of front-line service and to their superiors in the chain of command. One of the oft repeated infantrymen’s sayings [of the army] ...is: “They can do everything to a man except get him in the family way”’.137 As they became more assured tourists, the New Zealanders could take

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132 Sandford, WA II, Series 1, DA 447.23/2, NA.
133 Westbrook to Leigh (?), 22 March 1940, p.1, MS Papers 1407, folder 2, ATL.
134 Davin, p.34.
135 Joanna de Groot, ‘“Sex” and “Race”’, p.104.
136 ibid., p.105.
control of Egypt, just as the tourists of 1NZEF and 1AIF had done before them. Arriving in Aden in early 1940, Edmund White could confidently claim:

At Aden today, 8th Feb. Interesting only as being our first contact with the wiley [sic] Arab of whom we have heard many a tale from many an old Soldier Sam. After the lesson learnt from the cunning “Skindus” of Colombo our boys came cut on top in dealings here... Others took a little longer. The Twentieth Battalion’s official history, for example, described the route-marches into the desert, designed to toughen the men up after a period of relative inactivity on the troop-ships. Marching for long periods far out into the desert, ‘...a never-failing phenomenon...’ would be the appearance of groups of local selling oranges. ‘Their wares were welcome...’, stated the authors, ‘...but as the prices at the outset were rather high, the custom was to let “George” [the nickname given to virtually all Egyptian men] carry his case full for a while until fatigue reduced his price.’

As the New Zealanders began to establish their authority as tourists - to take ‘control’ of Egypt (as their predecessors had done) - the Wily Oriental Gentlemen (and women) could no longer put anything over them, the tourist was supreme. This hardening of attitude was, in part, a response to the realisation that Egypt was failing to live up to their expectations. In the words of one soldier: ‘If I owned Hell and Egypt, I’d sell up Egypt and go live in Hell.’

Many of the New Zealanders had arrived in Egypt possessing a set of images and expectations derived from the popular orientalism of the period. Indeed, as one New Zealander explained at the time:

...most of them [other New Zealand soldiers] loathe the place [Egypt], have ever since they came here, or at the least just tolerate it, but then of course the majority had all sorts of vague ideas about the mysterious and glamorous East, and were promptly disillusioned.

As Thomas Birks’ comments suggest, the Orient was for these tourists - as Edward Said has claimed of all Westerners - ‘...almost a European invention...’ and as such, had very little in common with the ‘real’ Egypt as the New Zealanders encountered it through their interaction with the local population. These interactions, the ‘tourist exchange’, proved to be a less than satisfactory one for 2(NZ) Division’s soldier-tourists. They found that the Egyptians themselves refused to be the passive and picturesque objects of the tourist gaze. Their very

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139 White, diary, 8 February 1940, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, ATL.
140 Pringle and Glue, p.20.
141 White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.61.
142 Stewart, p.84, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA.
143 Birks to mother, letter #54, 4 April 1942, p.5, MS 1413, folder 3, box 1, AIM.
144 Said, Orientalism, p.1.
presence, as Richard White has succinctly observed, ‘...subverted the purity of the Orient.'\textsuperscript{145} This resulted in a sense of loss or betrayal; a feeling that they had been 'gypped' by Egypt.

For the disillusioned New Zealanders, Egypt and its people continued to both impress and repulse. Only in the conventional sights would the vast majority of the New Zealanders find any satisfaction. Egypt's ancient history, its monuments and mosques would prove to be less problematical for the New Zealanders to absorb and 'consume' as tourist experiences. Here, Egypt's 'promise' of entry into the strange, the exotic and the mysterious Orient came closest to being fulfilled.

\textsuperscript{145} White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.62. Australian tourists in Naples also recorded similar reactions to the presence of the locals. As Pesman Cooper writes: 'Contact with the host society was minimal, confined to the denizens of monument-land - hoteliers, waiters, guides, beggars, teuts. Nonetheless, the tourists were all too prone to give their opinions on modern Naples, which spoilt the picturesque sites and historical atmosphere and interfered with imagination', Pesman Cooper, p.47.
Chapter Four

THE OTHER SIDE OF A SOLDIER'S LIFE

Fighting is not the only side of a soldier's life. Training, leaves, resting, sightseeing - new countries, new faces, new languages - they are all part of modern war.¹

Figure 9 - 'Our truck ablaze after a Stuka raid, July 1942'.
(Allan Doig Collection)

¹ Stewart, p.54, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA.
If the people of Egypt did not impress the New Zealanders, the conventional sights certainly did. '[M]any of us possessed only a very vague classroom picture of Egypt...'. confessed the editors of *Bab el Look*, '...as a great area of sand with pyramids and things scattered about the place...'. Just as 'Massey's Tourists' of 1NZEF had found it hard to ignore Egypt's great history and associated splendours, a generation later, the members of 2NZEF's tour found the pyramids and the 'things scattered about' to be equally interesting.\(^3\) As Pat Kane recalled in *A Soldier's Story*:

Every soldier visited the pyramids, the Muske [sic], The Sharia, the Mosque of Moahmet [sic] Ali, the Blue Mosque, the sports centres at Ghezira and Maadi, the Museum of Hygiene and the Cairo Museum. It would be hard to imagine a zoological garden which can compare to that of Cairo.\(^4\)

Egypt, and in particular Cairo, initially held an almost universal fascination for the tourists of 2(NZ) Division, as it had for their predecessors in 1NZEF. 'Perhaps it is its cosmopolitan nature...', Pat Kane continued, '...its antiquity, its ability to cater for all tastes from the most refined to the most vulgar. There is something...for everyone.'\(^5\)

For some of the Second New Zealand Division's tourists, however, it was Egypt's '...collection of monuments...' which dominated their accounts home.\(^6\) As had been the experience of the Anzacs before them, it was Egypt's ancient history which held their interest, for '...in the contemporary life that went on around the pyramids and temples there was little to keep the visitor.'\(^7\) In this sort of tourism, Roland Barthes argues: '...the human life of a country disappears to the exclusive benefit of its monuments. [The local inhabitants]...are a mere introduction, they constitute a charming and fanciful decor, meant to surround the essential part of the country: its collection of monuments.'\(^8\) Edmund White, for example, created what was, in essence, a catalogue of this 'decor'.

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\(^2\) *Bab el Look*, 15 January 1941, p.9.

\(^3\) For an account of the reactions of 1NZEF to Egypt, see Boyack, *Behind the Lines*, pp.12-31.

\(^4\) Kane, p.55.

\(^5\) Ibid. See also Burton, p.21.


\(^7\) White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.53.

\(^8\) Barthes, pp.74-75.
Today while having coffee at the ...Cafe du Nil, were as usual subjected to the kindly attentions of innumerable street vendors. Took out a pencil and paper and took down their names and various wares. Hamid - socks and handkerchiefs; Mahomet Razik - photographs; Ahmed - 7 o'clock blades; Abdul Mahomet - shoe shine; Mahmod - baboon and snakes; Mohammed - toothbrushes; Maim - walking sticks; Fast George - shoe shine; Zakem Haresh - cigarettes; Masabon - pictures and papers; Ahmed Aly - chewing gum; Ima Hamida - lottery tickets; Alberia - soap; Mahomet Razile - fortune teller; Aoushima - backsheesh.9

As his list suggests, for some members of 2(NZ) Division, the locals were a persistent intrusion who literally surrounded the sights and the sightseers.

Yesterday afternoon John and I went out to the Pyramids where we have not been previously. ...We had to shake off persistent hordes of guides all the way. They are a greasy mob, some of them turn on a righteous indignation when told to go to hell, which is very annoying.10

Despite the sometimes unwelcome attentions of various members of Egypt’s ‘fanciful decor’, numerous New Zealanders made, as one padre, Bill Thompson, did, the pyramids and Sphinx a ‘priority visit’ on their sight-seeing excursions.11

On the whole I have been having a most interesting time in Egypt. We have travelled about a good deal and I have had the opportunity to see most of the country. ...We had plenty of leave and so managed to do most of the usual trips - of course, the Pyramids, and the Sphinx, were first on the list and we climbed the Great Pyramid.12

Climbing the pyramids, the NZEF Times acknowledged, was almost a tourist rite of passage, for ‘...in Egypt “everybody” climbs the Pyramids...’13 As an Australian visitor to the pyramids at this time recalled: ‘...the limestone steps [were] ...smooth with the palms of pilgrims, devotees of the god of tourism, to whom every height is an obstacle to be alpined. Countless scratches made by the hobnails of the armies of the world scarred the stone.’14 The New Zealanders soon proved themselves faithful followers of the ‘god of tourism’. They could be found climbing up and going into the pyramids, sometimes within hours of their arrival in Egypt, and in the process adding their own ‘scratches’ to the pyramids.15

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9 White, diary, 14 July 1940, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, ATL.
10 J.N. Maclean to family, Saturday November 9 1940, p.5, MS Papers 1453, folder 1, ATL.
13 ‘This Awesome Energy. No.1, Climbing the Pyramids’, NZEF Times, 1, 10, Monday September 1 1941, p.7.
14 Frank Clune, Tobruk to Turkey: With the Army of the Nile, Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1943, p.144.
15 See Dangerfield, ‘Memories of “Hostilities Only” ’, p.10.
We climbed up the top of the biggest Pyramid and now the great name of Westbrook is carved on a stone on top of the 1st of the seven wonders of the world. I'll have to go up again and make a better job of it.\textsuperscript{16}

In their accounts of their 'pilgrimage', the New Zealanders included hearsay explanations of how the pyramids were built, complete with statistics gleaned from guides or guidebooks, in an attempt to convey what they had seen; although some, like Jim Dangerfield, were a little sceptical of their guides ‘...who gave the pater, true or false, on the history of the monument...’\textsuperscript{17} Like those of the ‘tourists’ of 1AIF (and of 1NZEF), their accounts conformed fully to the conventions of tourist description, complete with statistics and hearsay explanations.\textsuperscript{18}

...we went on an interesting trip to the pyramids of Giza. Out at Giza there are nine pyramids in all, there are three large ones all about the same size, and six small ones.... The pyramids as you know are memorials to the ancient kings, they of course were built at all different periods and the average age is about 5000. ...The pyramids were originally covered by a granite which was brought from Assuan [sic], which is about 500 miles distant. The present height of No.1 pyramid is about 430 ft the original height 480 ft which is the height of No.3. ...The period taken to build the first pyramid was about 30 years and 100 000 men were employed in the gigantic task. The guide's theory regarding the transport of the stone [is that it] was effected by river transport which could only be made when the Nile was flooded.\textsuperscript{19}

In his discussion of the reactions of 1NZEF to Egypt, Nicholas Boyack argues that ‘...coming from a country without any genuinely tall buildings, the New Zealanders were mystified by the construction of the pyramids.’\textsuperscript{20} Some members of 2NZEF also found the height of the pyramids to be worthy of comment. Arthur Helm, for example, found his ‘...preconceived idea of the pyramids was fully borne out when [he] ...stood in their gigantic shadow. They [were] ...awe inspiring,’\textsuperscript{21} while John Kennedy noted that ‘[t]he big pyramid occupies thirteen acres of land and is 461 ft high - so one can say it's four times as high as any building in Wellington.’\textsuperscript{22} For others, it was not the pyramids' height alone which captured their interest.

\textsuperscript{16} Westbrook to family, 22 March 1940, p.3, MS Papers 1407, folder 1, ATL.. See also Barry McFarlane and Judy Siers, ‘Ngaio’s World War II Heroes’, The Onslow Historian, 23, 1 & 2, 1993, p.11. There is a photograph of three Wellingtonians on the top of one of the pyramids, ca. 1943. Just visible to the right of Pte. S.G. Stevenson is the word “Wellington” etched into the stone. [I would like to thank Aaron Fox for drawing my attention to this photograph].

\textsuperscript{17} Dangerfield, ‘Memories of “Hostilities Only”’, p.11.

\textsuperscript{18} White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.53.

\textsuperscript{19} Raine to parents, 16 June 1941, pp.6-7, Micro MS 0578, ATL.

\textsuperscript{20} Boyack, Behind the Lines, p.13.

\textsuperscript{21} Helm, Fights and Furloughs in the Middle East, p.25.

\textsuperscript{22} Kennedy to family, 6 November 1941, pp.4-5, MS Papers 1449, folder 2, ATL.
Coming from a comparatively young nation, it was also Egypt’s antiquity which could arouse comment. ‘The interest in these things...’ explained one New Zealander, ‘...lies more in their antiquity than in anything else, for they do not conform to our conceptions of beauty - because of the ravages of the ages they are by no means perfect - bits missing etc.’,\(^{23}\) although not all the soldier-tourists were as interested in antiquity: ‘Everything seems to be so old over here dating back many thousands of years, I suppose it would suit some people but I am afraid the long past does not interest me a great deal.’\(^{24}\)

The majority of these sights were from Egypt’s ancient history. Ancient Egypt was a civilisation, Richard White argues, that was ‘...placed in a direct line to European civilisation, whereas modern Egypt was less comprehensible, more alien, the Orient, the Other.’\(^{25}\) Certainly, some of the New Zealanders of 2(NZ) Division appear to have shared this view. The 2NZEF Education and Rehabilitation Service’s booklet on Egypt, for example, sought to give ‘...some insight into the things and ideas that our civilisation and ways of living have inherited from it [Egypt],’\(^{26}\) while one member of 26 Battalion wrote:

> Mother Nile, the Egyptians call the river that runs through their country. ...It gave rise to an Empire that dwindled to impotence but yet lives in its ruins and monuments. It gave a culture and art to the world and at which we still marvel.\(^{27}\)

For the New Zealanders, there were two Egyptians; one - Ancient Egypt - at which the could marvel, and one - contemporary Egypt - by which they were repelled, and they sought to separate or differentiate the two.\(^{28}\)

> My first impression of this place was that of a decayed civilisation. Of course the main cities are quite modern in parts just like any other city. I'm talking of general atmosphere and particularly the natives. ...It seems wonderful to hark back through the centuries and think of the historic associations in which this country abounds. The land of the Pharaohs, Cleopatra. The most amazing thing to me is

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23 G.S. Snadden to family, letter #9, p.2, Accession 9200081, ‘Letters to family from 513358 Signum. G.S. Snadden’, AM.

24 James Young to Muriel McGregor, 5 October 1941, p.2, MS Papers 91-136, folder 2, ATL. Overall, they do, however, appear to have shared with countless tourists before (and after) them, what Dean MacCannell describes as ‘...a collective sense that certain sights must be seen.’ MacCannell, p.42.


26 Scobie, Egypt, p.1.

27 W. Robert Simpson to Patricia A. Talbott, 17 March 1943, p.6, MS Papers 4052, ATL.

28 The idea of two Egyptians has a long history in Western intellectual thought, see Martin Bernal, Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilisation, Vol.1, The Fabrication of Ancient Greece, 1785-1985, London: Free Association Books, 1987. For a summary of his argument see pp.22-38. [I would like to thank Dr. Brian Moloughney for this reference and for his helpful comments].
that such a poor, unfertile country with practically no natural, mineral or industrial resources could arise to so much greatness so many centuries ago.29

There was, however, Richard White maintains, one set of conventional sights - apart from those 'historic associations' of Ancient Egypt, which did '...provide a focus for some popular conceptions of the Orient. [For both 1AIF and 2NZEF] Egypt's religious associations, both Christian and Islamic, offered points of entry into the "mystery" of the Orient.'30

On Saturday ...I went on a conducted tour of "Old Cairo." It was very interesting. Our first stop was a Rhoda Island on the Nile where we were shown the spot (now marked with a tower) where Moses was reputed to have been found in the bulrushes. From there we paid a visit to an old Coptic Church built 650 AD. In the crypt is the place, now railed off, where the Holy Family rested on their flight into this country. We then paid visits to another old Coptic Church, a Jewish synagogue and the ruins of the first Mosque built in this country by Mahomed's [sic] son.31

Despite Cairo's Biblical links these sights did not appear to draw much comment from 2(NZ) Division. Hugh Butler's account (see above), for example, merely lists the 'stops' on his tour, and while Arthur Helm did provide a more detailed description and history of many of the religious sights in Cairo (he was, after all, working for the Education and Rehabilitation Service at the time), he concluded his narrative with the comment: 'Four Coptic churches, a convent, a mosque, a synagogue, a museum and a Greek Orthodox Church made quite a good "bag" for one afternoon....'32

Part of the problem may have been that these Biblical sights remained, as they had been for the original Anzacs, unprepossessing and that their impact largely depended upon associations which were quite tenuous.33 1NZEF member, Harold von Dadelszen was shown '...the spot where the Israelites were supposed to have ...[crossed the Red Sea] but as it is a long way from the land of the Pharaohs and through a beastly desert leading to another desert I am inclined to have a few doubts on the subject.'34 For von Dadelszen and for many of the other members of 1NZEF and of 2NZEF, it required a certain amount of faith, both religious faith and a more secular faith (in the guides), to be moved by some of these Biblical 'sights'.

29 Smith to family, 7 March 1941, pp.2-3, MS Papers 1701, folder 1, ATL.
30 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.54.
31 Hugh Butler to his mother, [March?] 1941, pp.1-2, MS Papers 1423, ATL.
32 Helm, Kiwis on Tour in Egypt and Italy, p.16. For an account of the contents of his "bag" see ibid., pp.12-16.
33 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.54.
34 von Dadelszen to family, 1 August 1918, p.12, MS Papers 0588, ATL.
Joseph's well - 2 akkers - hole about 20' square down to level of the Nile. Descending stairway all the way down - steep, dark - bats by the dozen. Story by guide about the Joseph being the biblical Joseph - probably hooey.  

2NZEF 'tourist' G.S. Snadden had found, as had many others, that it was difficult to be inspired by a 'hole' in the ground. Indeed, as Clarence Hawkins, a gunner with 1NZEF, had observed in his diary over 25 years earlier: '[t]he Gypoos tell some tales about the sights round here.'  

Even the more conventional of Christian religious sights, a church, could pose difficulties.

This church is said to be the oldest Coptic Church dating back to 41 AD, according to beliefs in this quarter but on consulting reference works I found that it could not have been built before the beginning of the 4th century and possibly later than that. ...The guide's most notable point regarding this church is that underneath the Altar is a crypt where legend says that Joseph, Mary and the child Jesus took refuge during their flight to Egypt; irrespective of the truth of this, however, many visit this church to worship solely in view of this tradition. In common with the other famous churches in Cairo, I believe, although the guides naturally do not mention it, that the really unique museum pieces such as panels, screens, icons etc. have been removed to museums. Indeed, I do not take all that the guides say as gospel although by constant repetition they undoubtedly themselves believe it....

In contrast, Islamic Cairo proved to be of far more interest. An 'amateur soldier' of 1NZEF had observed of Cairo's mosques, '...they were worthy of the most careful examination' and the 'amateurs' and 'professionals' of 2NZEF also shared this opinion.

...the glory of Cairo is in its mosques and there is no place on earth where so many can be seen together. ...A man must have a hard heart not to respond to some of the mosques, for between them they have practically every quality that pleases the senses.

The New Zealanders did 'respond' to the mosques, and their response was, naturally, that of tourists. Like the Anzac tourists of World War One, the New Zealanders were fascinated by the architecture and history of the mosques (which featured prominently in drawings and photographs submitted to the NZEF Times) and they enjoyed the rituals associated with visiting these places. If Richard White is correct in his analysis, then the soldier-tourists would have been expected '...to relate to the known rather than the unknown, the culturally familiar rather

35 G.S. Snadden, diary, Sunday 14 [February 1943], 'G.S. Snadden, Diary 23 Dec. 1942 - 5 Aug. 1943', Accession 9200082, AM.  
36 Hawkins, diary, Sunday 26 December 1915, MS Papers 1439, folder 1, ATL.  
37 Colin Armstrong, 'Notes on Church of St. Sargiuos or Abu Sarga Church', undated, p.A1. [Armstrong papers].  
39 Scobie, Egypt, p.52.
than the exotic’, yet the New Zealanders, like the Australians of 1AIF, appeared to be relatively unmoved by the Biblical sights.40

Their response to Islamic Cairo may have been due to the fact that while the mosques were foreign, they were also familiar. As has been argued, their very architecture, with their minarets and domes, was a familiar representation of the East or the ‘Orient’ in the West in general.41 ‘Cairo is a weird place...,’ wrote John Westbrook, ‘...as we entered it we passed mosques and houses with the inevitable dome tops (the apparent sign of the Near East I suppose)....’42 Not only were the mosques familiar, in the context of the popular imagery of the period, their quietness and order were in welcome contrast to the cacophony and chaos of the streets outside, enabling many of the soldier-tourists to appreciate them at a more secular level. These mosques were what the tourists of 2(NZ) Division had expected to see, but they (and their counterparts in 1AIF and 1NZEF) found the Biblical sights more problematic. Those sights, from a tourist’s point of view, were singularly unimpressive.

Apart from sightseeing there were other ways in which they demonstrated their tourist point of view. Just as the Australian and New Zealand troops of the First World War had, members of 2(NZ) Division also carefully numbered their letters home, to counter the unpredictability of the post and ensure that their accounts of their journey would be read sequentially.43

I wonder when you will get this. I will start it now and add to it or start another as I want to. I will number my letters at the start so you will know what order they are in.44

They were essentially recreating a travel diary, a literary form which had been popular in the era of the Grand Tour, and one which, it has been suggested, many Australians and (it could also be argued) many New Zealanders had used as the model for not only writing about their experiences in World War One but also ‘...making sense of and giving shape to their war as it

41 ibid., p.55. See also Downes, p.62. [Cited earlier]. To some, the mosques were also ‘familiar’ in other ways. Stuart Black, for example, a member of 28(Maori) Battalion, found that the mosques contained elements similar to those in Maori culture. To him, their layout was akin to that on marae, with clearly defined tapu and noa areas. Stuart Black, interview, Dunedin, 21 August 1995.
42 Westbrook, letter to family, 27 Feb. 1940, p.2, MS Papers 1407, folder 1, ATL.
44 Maclean, ‘Epistle No. 1’, [1940?], p.1, MS Papers 1453, folder 1, ATL. For other examples see also, J.W.A. Kennedy, letters, MS Papers 1449, ATL.; A.A. McLean, letters, MS Papers 2378, ATL.; R.J.G. Smith, letters, MS Papers 1701, folder 1, ATL.; G.S. Snadden, letters, Accession 9200081, AM; H.K. Ngata, ‘Private letters: May 1940 to April 1941’, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.
Certainly, the First World War had produced a number of memoirs, with titles such as With the ANZACS in Cairo and The Mounted Riflemen in Sinai and Palestine: The Story of New Zealand's Crusaders, which emphasised the role of travel and gave a sense of place; and it was a genre that also found expression in the Second World War. Here, once again, travel was emphasised in such titles as Italian Journey, Passage to Tobruk: The Diary of a Kiwi in the Middle East and Kalimera Kiwi: To Olympus with the New Zealand Engineers. The role of travel can even be seen in more recent publications, for example, Pat Kane's A Soldier's Story: A Mediterranean Odyssey and Donald Grant's A Working Holiday 1940-1945. Just as travel could feature in the titles of these works, so too could tourism, most notably in Arthur Helm's Fights and Furloughs in the Middle East: A Story of Soldiering and Travel in Libya, Egypt, Palestine, Greece, Crete, TransJordan, Syria, Irak and Iran; and even more explicitly in Kiwis on Tour in Egypt and Italy: A Soldier's Story of Travel and Sightseeing in Egypt, Italy and Sicily. To some observers, such as Paul Fussell, the relationship between war and writing about travel was more than coincidental. As Fussell argues, in World War One, wartime restrictions together with the actual front-line conditions led many soldiers to fantasise about travel, fantasies which some, such as Alec Waugh, Osbert Sitwell, D.H. Lawrence and Robert Graves, would later act out. For Fussell, a number '...of the most assiduous travellers of the [1920s and 1930s] ...were those whose wanderlust and all else the war had nearly extinguished.'

The fantasies of flight and freedom which animate the imagination of the 20s and 30s and generate its pervasive images of travel can be said to begin in the trenches.

As well as in their memoirs, the New Zealanders of 2(NZ) Division also expressed their tourist identity in other ways. As has been shown, sightseeing became part of the New Zealanders' experience of war and of travel in the Second World War. The ruins visited by many of the troops were, according to Richard White '...an essential element in the image that the tourist from the new world had of the old.' While sightseeing therefore enabled the New Zealanders to form an image of the old world, it also encouraged the formation of images of the

45 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', pp.68-69.
46 ibid., p.69.
47 Travel and tourism also regularly feature in the chapter titles of both official and unofficial works. See for example Llewellyn, Ch.2., 'How to See Egypt on a Pound a week', Journey Towards Christmas, pp.15-26; and Jackson, Ch.7., 'Cook's Tourists', Passage to Tobruk, pp.79-87.
49 Fussell, Abroad, p.4.
50 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.72.
Each Echelon and a number of the Reinforcements were given a satirical name by which they were known.

First Echelon men were known as “Debt Dodgers” or “Wife Beaters.” Second Echelon were diverted to the UK where they spent 12 months or more, so they became “Cook’s Tourists.” Third Echelon and Fourth Reinforcements ...were called “Red Arses” because ...[they] knew nothing! Fifth Reinforcements were “One-Jumpers” - being one jump ahead of conscription.52

Despite possessing these separate ‘special identities’, their troopship and unit magazines all contain parodies of tourist advertisements, suggesting that collectively, the ‘tourist’ identity was one which they all shared and which was also primary to their sense of self-identification. It was the ‘tourist’ identity that they intensely possessed. The Second Echelon’s magazine, The Blitztourists, (the title of which needs no further comment) exhorted its readers to enrol with ‘Crook’s Tours Unlimited (under personal direction of Bringabeer Largest). Join the 2nd Echelon and see the world! See it twice! See it several times!'53

This same tourist identity could also be found in other publications. The Eighth Army’s weekly newspaper, The Crusader, for example, contained an article entitled ‘Prelude to Tripoli’; an article which bears a striking resemblance to a tourist brochure or piece of travel writing. ‘Going West young man?...’, it asked, ‘Then you’ll want to know something about the towns you may visit when the Axis troops have been squeezed off the African coast.’54 Like any piece of travel writing, it commenced by establishing its author’s credentials, his ‘authenticity’. The author was ‘...an Eighth Army N.C.O. who lived in Tunisia for many years before the war and was a frequent visitor to Tripoli...' The Crusader assured its readers, and also like a tourist guidebook (for this is surely what the article was) it offered advice for the tourists within Eighth Army’s ranks.55

If you like bathing, there are some good beaches to the east of the town, with rotunda cafés and all the usual amenities. ...On either side ...[of the Avenue Jules Ferry in Tunis] are cafés, restaurants, hotels, shops, modern cinemas and cabarets - I can specially recommend the Villa d’Este for a good evening.56

51 ‘Travel, like culture...', James Buzard has argued, ‘...offers an imaginative freedom not as a rule available in modern social life; it encourages the fashioning of special identities, good for the duration of the journey and afterwards - identities privately and intensely possessed...’ Buzard, p.5.

52 Lovegrove, p.40.

53 The Blitztourists, 1941, p.8.

54 The Crusader: Eighth Army Weekly, 34, 3, 21 December 1942, p.4. [Armstrong papers].

55 ibid. See also, ‘“Crusader” Presents a Tunisian Travel-talk’, The Crusader: Eighth Army Weekly, 42, 4, 15 February 1943, pp.4-5.

56 The Crusader, 21 December 1942, p.5.
For those looking for souvenirs 'the Tunis soukhs are the finest outside Morocco and in them you can buy beautiful carpets.' Sightseers too, were catered for and were advised to '...go to the Institut Oceanographique de Salambo, which, in spite of its long name, is one of the finest aquariums in the world.'

While the literature of the war clearly acknowledged the tourist motif, this tourist identity could also find expression in a number of wartime situations.

...the sunsets are the most beautiful ever I have seen. To one whose imagination is a little coloured by thoughts of war, it sometimes seems that the sky has been splashed with blood. At others, great banks of black storm-cloud reflect the angry glare of flame-like light as though from a red furnace. Gradually the flames will spread till every cloud is red hot and the fire covers the whole sky; then as though the furnace doors are closing, the glow slowly fades into night.

Fred Fleming, like many others whose imaginations were 'coloured by thoughts of war', also found beauty in war itself. In an earlier letter to his cousin he described watching a dogfight above El Alamein. 'We saw many a battle...', he wrote, 'I'm sure you would have been inspired to poetry by those tiny silver and black specks playing such fantastic games in the clouds - deadly games.' These 'deadly games' also provided sights for the spectators on the ground, and on occasion drew a response similar to that of a crowd watching another sort of 'deadly game' - test-match rugby (illustrating the relationship between war and sport).

A parachute blossomed, then another appeared but tangled on opening. As the poor devil, apparently on fire, hurtled earthwards and thumped into the ground to burst near us, we all cheered, and cheered again as the bomber with the rest of the crew inside also hit the ground, exploded into flame and in a single 'whoosh' incinerated the crew.

Others, like R.T. Street, described anti-aircraft fire as '...a magnificent fireworks display, weaving like fiery serpents' while another member of 2(NZ) Division found it to be:

...a grand spectacle to watch a display like this as the ack-ack use tracer and when they spray the shells into the air they present a grand variety of colours - red, white, blue, green and yellow. They burst like a star. The sky seems filled with a myriad of shooting stars, all colours, white puffs of smoke from shell bursts.... The planes caught in the [searchlight] beams seem like tiny moths as they dive to escape....

57 ibid.
58 Fleming, 22 December 1940, "Dear Cousin - Cheerio, Fred", p.9.
59 ibid., 3 December 1942, p.23.
61 Blythe, p.81.
63 Stewart, p.84, WW II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA.
Not only could war provide a backdrop to sight-seeing, it also generated sights. Richard White has demonstrated how, in World War One, ‘[t]he process of turning battle sites into tourist sights began almost immediately.’ Scenes of such carnage as Anzac Cove and Pozières were visited by both participants and newcomers on what he describes as a ‘...combination of pilgrimage and tourist jaunt...’,64 while Paul Fussell notes that postcards offering ‘Greetings From The Trenches’ were sold at shops which were just behind the front lines of many major First World War battlefields.65 This glossing of war with tourist significance (to paraphrase Judith Adler) was a process which, as Geoff Dyer illustrates in The Missing of the Somme, continued after that war.66 Travelling with two companions to visit the Somme it becomes apparent to him that ‘[n]one of us is quite sure whether we’re on a gloomy holiday or a rowdy pilgrimage. We are not the first to be uncertain on this score....’:

During the twenties the British Legion and the St Barnabas Society organised subsidised trips to enable relatives of the dead ...to make a pilgrimage to the cemeteries where their loved ones lay. ...Most of the pilgrims were bereaved women, but their numbers soon came to include veterans wanting to revisit the battlefields. Comforts were few on such trips, but there were also large numbers of visitors who wanted - and were willing to pay for - a less arduous and sombre trip around the trenches and cemeteries of France and Flanders: tourists, in short.67

This transformation of battlefields into tourist sights was continued by the New Zealanders of the Second Division in Egypt and later, Italy. One New Zealander, revisiting Fort Capuzzo in North Africa wrote:

The ground about the Fort showed many evidences of the battles that had been fought in previous months, everywhere were shell-holes, unexploded shells, bullets, arms, wrecked carriers and graves, in fact we spent a lot of spare time just wandering over this immense battle field, always finding something of fresh interest....68

64 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.72.
67 Dyer, pp.102-103. So large were the numbers of these latter visitors that, in Lyn Macdonald's opinion, Ypres in 1920 became '...the booming mecca of the first mass-explosion of tourism in history....' Lyn Macdonald, They Call It Passchendaele, London: Michael Joseph, 1978, p.3. [Dyer believes Macdonald is exaggerating, although, as he notes, '...in 1930 a hundred thousand people signed the visitors' book at the Menin Gate in just three months,' p.104.]
68 R.G. Blampied, 'Libya '41: A true and accurate Account of six months in the Line, 22 June 1942 to 28 Feb. 1943', p.4, WA II, Series 1, DA 441.23/7, NA.
Touring the battlefield also provided the soldier-tourists with the opportunity to find articles of ‘fresh interest’, to acquire that other ‘adjunct of tourism’, the souvenir.\textsuperscript{69} The New Zealanders sent home a variety of momentos taken from the enemy (taken from both the living and the dead), as well as the more conventional souvenirs purchased in Egypt and other ports of call - and some unconventional items, such as petrified wood, birds’ eggs and preserved scorpions.\textsuperscript{70} (In other situations, these ‘tourists’, who considered themselves to be representative of New Zealand ‘manhood’, could be found pressing wildflowers to send home as reminders).\textsuperscript{71} Initially the soldiers appear not to have drawn any great distinction between the sources of such momentos. John McLeod, for example, claims: ‘[t]he New Zealanders’ adeptness at looting, often demonstrated in Italy, was rarely seen in North Africa, being limited to battlefield souvenirs and “the odd spot of booty” from prisoners of war. Both sides considered the latter “fair game” in this regard and, although the practice was frowned upon, few steps were taken to prevent it.’\textsuperscript{72} On occasion the soldiers would go to great lengths to acquire ‘souvenirs’, even to the extent of exposing themselves to danger from friend and foe.

My mate and I went right ahead of our lines to the huns [sic] lines and we were fired on by both sides. Never mind, we had a great time. As we were coming back our boys tried to mortar us and the shells landed in very close which made things very uncomfortable. Never-the-less we out-witted both sides and we were loaded up with all sorts of junk. Now is the trouble of getting it home.\textsuperscript{73}

In this case, one would suspect that profit rather than philanthropy was the motive behind these men’s actions. Nonetheless, it appears that the \textit{Ashburton Guardian} was correct when it published a letter from a local man on active service in Egypt under the headline: ‘War in Desert, Many Souvenirs Acquired.’\textsuperscript{74}

The ‘adjunct’ of war - death - also provided opportunities for sight-seeing of a type. Returning from the Syrian-Turkish border, the members of 2 Ammunition Company made a detour specifically to view the graves of New Zealanders buried in the World War One cemetery

\textsuperscript{69} White, ‘The Soldier as Tourist’, p.73.
\textsuperscript{70} Street, ‘Narrative of Experiences in 2NZEF’, vol.1, p.84, WA II, Series 6, Micro-Z 2801, NA.
\textsuperscript{71} Hood, p.21, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL. 1AIF in England were also fond of such momentos, see White, ‘Bluebells and Fogtown’, p.49.
\textsuperscript{72} McLeod, p.131.
\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Ashburton Guardian}, 24 February 1942, WA II, Series 2, item 63, ‘Soldiers’ letters’ [Collection of newspaper clippings of letters from WW II servicemen abroad published in New Zealand newspapers], bundle 1, NA.
Figure 10 - Souvenir hunting on the battlefield.
(Allan Doig Collection)
near Jerusalem. Visiting the El Alamein war cemetery, an officer with the New Zealand Dental Corps recalled the 'impressive sight' which lay (quite literally) before him.

In row upon row, six thousand five hundred graves with their uniform lines made an impressive and unforgettable sight in the blazing sun, with flocks of black crows hovering overhead in the windless stifling heat. ...In the New Zealand section I found the names of some of my pre-war patients....

For Roy Hanan and others, the cemeteries and graves offered a more personal 'sight-seeing' experience. For Hanan, it was the seeing the names of pre-war patients which gave a visit to the cemetery added significance and for Brian Moss, of 27(MG) Battalion, it was seeing the grave of a close friend. 'I took my truck up to the 5th M.D.S [Medical Dressing Station]...' wrote Moss, '...and Dick Little took a photo of Johnny's grave. It was not finished off, but the cross was up and we placed a great sheaf of poppies on the mound before taking the picture.'

Photography was, of course, an essential element in tourism. Cameras had been everywhere with 1NZEF, despite edicts against their use and Kodak had even produced a 'Soldier's Kodak' for the troops in World War One. 'Every Soldier needs a Soldier's Kodak...', ran its advertisement, '...Thousands of soldiers in all parts of the world are making their own "picture-record" with the Soldier's Kodak.' By the 1940s, cameras were commonplace, despite - once again - prohibitions restricting their use in some areas. The soldier-tourists of 2(NZ) Division heeded the advice of the Kodak advertisements in the NZEF Times: 'Send Snapshots Home! Your letters will be even more appreciated if you enclose a few snapshots of your friends and of the places you visit. But see you get good snaps, because a lot of folks will be looking at them.' Certainly many of the New Zealanders, such as Captain Noel Chapman of 25 Battalion, concurred with Kodak.

I'm sending with this the folders which give a brief description of all the places I've visited, also photos of places I've been to and these will give you more information than I can possibly put down on paper.

75 D. Lankshear, 'Unofficial narrative of 2 NZ Ammunition Company, Dec. 1942-April 1944', p.45, WA II, Series 1, DA 105/15/4, NA.
76 Roy Hanan, A Dentist at Large, Christchurch: Roy Hanan, 1977, p.72.
77 Moss, diary, 6 June (1944), MS Papers 2281, folder 3, item 4, "Diary 1944", ATL.
78 Photographs, in Susan Sontag's analysis, enable people '...to take possession of space in which they are insecure. Thus, photography develops in tandem with one of the most characteristic of modern activities: tourism.' Susan Sontag, On Photography, New York: Farrer, Strauss & Giroux, 1977, p.9.
80 NZEF Times, 2, 73, Monday 16 November 1942, p.4.
81 Chapman, diary, 25 May 1944, Accession 1986.1846, AM.
Figure 11 - ‘New Zealand troops visiting war cemetery [sic] in Palestine’, 1942. *(Unknown War History Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ: F24301/4DA)*
Not only could photographs make their ‘travels’ more interesting, they could also convey what they had seen to interested third-parties at home. Photographs became an important element in recording their tour, of authenticating their experiences. For those without access to a camera, the need to provide ‘indisputable evidence’ of their ‘tourist’ activities was catered for. The Pall Mall Studio at 33 Malika Farida Street in Cairo, for example, offered readers of the NZEF Times the chance to ‘...Have your picture taken “At the Pyramids” in our studio. Send them home as Xmas cards, nothing will be more appreciated.’ Even in wartime, the commercial nature of tourism could not be denied.

The term ‘tourist’ has acquired a number of negative connotations - connotations which James Buzard has demonstrated have been more than two centuries in the making and which have been exploited ever since. ‘Though it is often used in this derogatory sense without great precision “tourist” does rest upon a rough consensus.... The tourist is the dupe of fashion, following blindly where authentic travellers have gone with open eyes.’ For Paul Fussell:

What distinguishes the tourist [from the traveller] is [his or her] motives, few of which are ever openly revealed: to raise social status at home and to allay social anxiety; to realise fantasies of erotic freedom; and most important, to derive secret pleasure from posing momentarily as a member of a social class superior to one’s own....

In a number of ways, many of the New Zealanders displayed behaviour consistent with Fussell’s description of the ‘tourist’. Some of 2(NZ) Division’s ‘tourists’, such as Allan Doig, appeared to find a sense of satisfaction from being able to recount their journeys and experiences to an ignorant but interested audience. While in England on an OCTU course, he wrote:

...another chap and I were talking to some ATS [members of the Women’s Auxiliary Territorial Service] who were keen as mustard to learn about New Zealand and Cairo and the Middle East so of course that was right in our line. It was the first time we had met anyone who knew nothing of the places we had been to and I enjoyed very much being able to tell them all they wanted to know.

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82 ‘Photographs ...offer indisputable evidence that the trip was made, that the program was carried out, that fun was had. Photographs document sequences of consumption carried on outside the view of family, friends, neighbours.’ Sontag, p.9.

83 NZEF Times, 1, 24, Monday 8 December 1941, p.2.

84 Buzard, p.1.

85 Fussell, Abroad, p.42. Similarly, Philip Pearce and Gianna Moscardo have observed that ‘[t]ravel experiences, like other consumer products, can be used to demonstrate an individual’s status and perceived worth.’ Philip L. Pearce and Gianna M. Moscardo, ‘The Concept of Authenticity in Tourist Experiences’, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, 22, 1 (March 1986), p.131. [Henceforth ANZJS].

86 Allan Doig to family, 20 December 1943, p.32. [Doig Collection].
For others, the ‘freedom’ offered by tourism contrasted favourably with the realities of their military lives. Divisional Ammunition Company, for example, found that:

Having spent six glorious months in travelling about the vast, changing yet eternally consistent Middle East; viewing places and peoples that in their multitude of shades of existence are like the colours of a great spectrum, it was hard to revert to the regimentation of a base camp....

Indeed, for some, such as Thomas Birks, being sent back to Cairo was ‘...all rather disappointing.’ He had wanted to ‘...go on to some place I’ve not seen, or at any rate stay here till I’ve had a look at everything worth seeing here, but I suppose after all, its [sic] a war we’re engaged on and not a Cook’s Tour.’

Not only could their experiences as tourists increase their ‘social status’ (although very few would have admitted to this) and provide opportunities for ‘freedom’ (erotic or otherwise), it did on occasion enable them to experience a sense of superiority over fellow ‘tourists’. John Westbrook, on leave in Cairo in 1941, met his old boss from the Publishing Department of the New Zealand Herald, who, in the best egalitarian traditions of New Zealand public mythology, was now also an ‘other rank’ in the New Zealand Army.

It was his first visit to Cairo and he was a bit lost so I took him under my wing and showed him the sights. ...I showed him a couple of Soldiers Clubs and the native bazaars. I have a good idea as to how I looked when I first arrived in Cairo now - all eyes and a wide open mouth. The surprise that he showed at different things kept me amused all the time. He wanted a watch strap and when, after a bit of haggling, I paid a peddler down ...[in price], he told me that I had no heart at all! Another thing that amused me too was that they had the same lecture as we did when we first arrived here about being careful about what we ate. They were told (like us) to lay off lettuce and tomatoes and ice-cream. Well, we had a meal at one of the restaurants - the meal included salad and ice-cream and ...[I] had two helpings of salad and ice-cream! George was sticking very religiously to the advice of his M.O. [Medical Officer] - he’ll soon get over that!

Westbrook’s amusement at George’s reactions to the sights and sounds (and in all probability the smells) of Cairo as well as his unadventurous adherence to his Medical Officer’s warings on diet, came from a sense of superiority - superiority derived from experience. Westbrook was a veteran (in both senses of the word) tourist.

The desire of the ‘veteran’ tourists to demonstrate their sophistication also extended to language.

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88 Birks to his mother, letter # 113, 12 May 1943, p.6, MS 1413, folder 5, box 2, AIM.
89 Westbrook to his mother, 3 February 1941, pp.2-3, MS Papers 1407, folder 3, ATL.
I'm attending Arabic classes at the Maadi Preparatory School so I might be able to talk Gyppo when I go home. It doesn't seem to be so hard. It was a toss up between Arabic and French. I thought I might as well take Arabic as I was in an Arabic country.\footnote{Westbrook to family, 22 March 1940, p.3, MS Papers 1407, folder 1, ATL. Similarly, some New Zealand soldiers in World War One were offered the chance to learn French prior to their departure for the Western Front. In Dunedin, for example, Madame Squarise held free instructional classes for soldiers. These classes proved so popular that larger rooms had to be found in which to conduct the lessons. 'Those reaching France to take part in the Empire's battles...', declared the \textit{Otago Daily Times}, '...will enjoy the beauties of that country infinitely better if able to converse with the inhabitants in their own language.' \textit{Otago Daily Times}, Saturday 8 July 1916, pp.5, 11. [I would like to thank Bill Keane for this reference].}

Westbrook was, obviously, not the only soldier to learn 'Gyppo'. Each number of the First Echelon's shipboard magazine \textit{The Transport} Z.6, for example, contained a 'phrase dictionary' - a practice continued in the Education and Rehabilitation Service's guidebooks - while many of the soldiers' diaries consulted contained lists of words and phrases in Arabic, usually in the back cover, for easy reference.\footnote{See 'Soldiers' Arabic', \textit{The First Echelon}, \textit{The Transport} Z.6, 1, 4 (4 February 1940), p.9; 'Useful Arabic words', \textit{Services Guide to Cairo}, Cairo: Co-ordinating Council for Welfare Work in Egypt, 1942[?], p.36. [Armstrong Collection]; \textit{Pocket Guide of English-Arabic-French: Self-study for Soldiers in Egypt}, Auckland: A.M Farnall, 1942, p.20. [Armstrong Collection]. For examples of diaries see Edmund White, diary 1940-1941, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, ATL, pp.99-100; G.F. Withers, diary.} There were obvious advantages for the New Zealanders in being able to speak some Arabic, especially in their dealings with Cairo's 'entrepreneurial poor'. Francis Jackson, for example, '...learnt most of the essential words in the wogs' language...' although, for most of the New Zealanders, the vast majority of these 'essential words' were in fact, commands, and often some of the first (and sometimes only) words learnt were 'Imshi yalla' or 'Go away!'.\footnote{Jackson, p.23; \textit{Pocket Guide of English-Arabic-French}, p.32. [Armstrong Collection]. See also Allan Doig, interview, Dunedin 29 June 1995. In his opinion, many of the soldiers learnt 'Just the basic commands to control the wogs.'} In fact, some found that they still needed to learn a few more 'essential' words:

It is a funny thing, I haven't learnt one Arabic swear word. The Gypos seem to be able to swear quite fluently in English, even though they can't speak English.\footnote{Westbrook to family, 7 April 1940, p.4, MS Papers 1407, folder 1, ATL.}

Learning the language was an essential element in being a tourist, or more accurately, an anti-tourist. It was proof of one's authenticity as a 'traveller' as opposed to a tourist.
...the anti-tourist is not to be confused with the traveller: his motive is not inquiry but self-protection and vanity. ...Abroad, the techniques practiced by anti-tourists anxious to assert their difference from all those tourists are more shifty. All involve attempts to merge into the surroundings, like speaking the language, even badly.94

The anti-tourist's desire to be a traveller instead of a tourist is both a symptom and a cause of tourist angst, and, in Fussell's opinion, an indicator of class. 'Only the upper elements of the middle classes suffer from it.... This is to say that the working class finds nothing shameful about tourism. It is the middle class that has read and heard just enough to sense that being a tourist is somehow offensive and scorned by an imagined upper class it hopes to emulate and, if possible, be mistaken for.'95 Yet, as Jonathan Culler writes: '[t]ourists can always find someone more touristy than themselves to sneer at.... Once one recognises that wanting to be less touristy than other tourists is part of being a tourist, one can recognise the superficiality of most discussions of tourism, especially those that stress the superficiality of tourists.'96

It should be conceded at this point that those who, like Paul Fussell, seek to draw a distinction between the motives and methods of the 'tourist' as opposed to the 'traveller' are merely propagating one of the myths of modern tourism. According to Culler, the desire to distinguish between tourists and real travellers is integral to tourism rather than outside or beyond it.97 For James Buzard, snobbish 'anti-tourism' (of the type practiced by Fussell and others) has been an element of modern tourism from the start. It has, in Buzard's opinion, '...offered an important, even exemplary way of regarding one's own cultural experiences as authentic and unique, setting them against a backdrop of always assumed tourist vulgarity and repetition, and ignorance.'98 This is a phenomenon which is still present not only in advertisements for tours but also in contemporary travel-writing.99 Yet this tourist / traveller dichotomy does, Buzard suggests, serve an important function.

94 Fussell, Abroad, p.47.
95 ibid., p.49. Tourist angst is the '...gnawing suspicion that after all you've said you are still a tourist like every other tourist', Alan Brien, 'Tourist Angst', The Spectator, July 31, 1959, p.133. [This feeling of angst is a mark of the educated middle-class, but the capacity of the upper-class, and indeed of the working-class, to cheerfully admit to being a tourist and share in collective tourist pleasures without angst has been questioned. See, Buzard, p.5.]
96 Culler, 'The Semiotics of Tourism', pp.157-158.
97 Culler, p.156. [Interestingly, while Fussell maintains this traveller / tourist distinction throughout his discussion, he claims the main 'travellers' during World War One were the '...hapless soldiery shipped to France and Belgium and Italy and Mesopotamia', Fussell, Abroad, p.9.].
98 Buzard, p.5.
99 See for example 'Why STA Travel?' [advertisement] in The Strip, 39, February 1997, p.50. STA Travel, the advertisement proclaims, is '[f]or travellers, not tourists.' For an excellent and entertaining discussion of the modern 'traveller's' desire to dissociate himself or herself from the 'tourist' see Sallie Tisdale, 'Never Let
The experiences and performative opportunities provided on tour have contributed vitally to the lasting conceptions tourists (travellers?) build about themselves and the societies they inhabit and tour - images of self and setting reciprocally reinforcing one another. For both, Judith Adler's statement that in travel 'Enduring identities are often narratively constructed on the basis of brief adventures' holds true.100

Given the popularity of the travel narrative in the inter-war period, and the extent to which centuries of '...concerted cultural stereotyping...' had ensured the spread of the mythical 'tourist' image, it is probable that many New Zealanders would have also been aware of the supposed difference in '...inner mental or imaginative conditions...' of tourists and travellers.101 The editors of the NZEF Times were relying upon this awareness when they published a 'Johnny Enzed says...' article entitled 'You can keep your culture'.

Every good soldier ought to have a guide book, an atlas, a bound volume of "Gay Paree", three bottles of aspirin, his own beer.... ...I'm thinking more about the guide book. I feel now that I wasted my trip over here. I can't remember much about it at all. And that's not just because it was eighteen months ago. The morning after every port I remembered even less about it than I do now. I had to get somebody like the padre to tell me about it so I could write a respectable letter home. Take Perth.... Honestly, how much of Perth have you really seen? By the time I'd crossed the road to the other pub there, it was time to catch the boat. Take Colombo.... A few of us went out to a joint - a place called the Hotel Lavinia and had a quick look at some palm-fringed sweeping-shore kind of scenery. Real postcard stuff. ...And then one of those Buddhist temples, where they squirted an extra bit of scent about because it was a hot day and we had taken our boots off. And even when we had given a whole penny to the guide the blokes who helped us on and off with our boots wanted a rake off. It all left us a bit discouraged about this mind-broadening business. We spent money until we felt less cultured. We also felt more broke. We wandered about beating down the price of everything from real estate to 5 cent cigars and buying nothing. And Cairo? Why, I could fill a book with what I haven't seen. I could fill two books with what I HAVE seen. The point is, though, that I have slipped badly on these educational opportunities. I ought to feel ashamed of myself ...BUT MAN, WHAT FUN WE'VE HAD!102

The article played upon well-established ideas of the educative and acculturating function of travel, and, in particular, the supposed responses of the 'traveller' as opposed to the 'tourist'. The author was playing the role of the vulgar tourist, lamenting the loss of those educational opportunities thought to be provided by travel. The onset of modern tourism had, in Buzard's opinion, led to a competitive aspect of travel's functions '...as travellers sought to distinguish themselves from "mere tourists" they saw or imagined around them.'103

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100 Buzard, p.5. See Adler, p.1385.
101 Buzard, p.3.
102 NZEF Times, 1, 4, Monday 21 July 1941, p.4. [Emphasis in the original].
103 Buzard, p.6.

the Locals See Your Map: Why most travel writers should stay at home', Harper's Magazine, September 1995, pp.66-74. [I would like to thank Dr. Rob Rabel for providing me with a copy of this article].
tourist, in this environment, was the figure who failed to ‘...employ objects of culture in the manner appropriate to successful acculturation ...[instead] clinging to domestic habits and amenities which destroy the foreignness of foreign places once they are introduced into them.’

In the article, the unadventurous soldier-tourist preferred the familiarity (and the beer) of a Perth pub to any attempt at ‘seeing’ the city, relying instead upon second-hand knowledge in order to fulfil the required educative function of travel. Even in Colombo, with its ‘real postcard’ scenery and foreignness in the form of a Buddhist temple, the tourist was more concerned with the smell of sweaty feet and the unwelcome attention of guides and touts, who all required a ‘rake off’, to any attempt at ‘...meaningful contact with what these places essentially were.’

This inability to come to terms with a foreign culture, or indeed, this inability to show any interest in that culture, then led to a questioning of the ‘mind-broadening business’ of travel. Clearly then, ‘Johnny Enzed’ was aware of the supposed roles of travellers and tourists, and revelled in his tourist identity; after all, although he had ‘slipped badly’ on these educational opportunities and ought to feel ‘ashamed’ of himself, ‘what fun he’d had’.

Like all tourists, however, the initial novelty of new places, experiences and peoples wore off. Tourist enthusiasm gave way to tourist ennui. Egypt, in particular, rapidly lost its initial appeal and became, as it had for 1NZEF, ‘...the land of the five “esses”; Sun, Sand, Smells, Shit and Syphilis.’ Once again, the NZEF Times was able to articulate the feelings of many of its readers. In an article titled ‘The Idealist’, the writer described the process by which the soldier-tourist became less and less enamoured with Egypt, despite his initial enthusiasm.

At the beginning he was thrilled by Cairo. He was in a new country, among strange people and he was curious. Now he could see life. He went on sight-seeing trips, trying to show an intelligent interest in Tutankhamen, Rameses the Second, Cheops and others of whom he had never heard. Soon he came back to the city exhausted - relieved to be out of their suffocating tombs. He threw himself into the night life. He toured the streets of ill repute, with his pals, and laughed. Later he went back alone. It was not long before he realised that a soldier could only see the worst parts of any country he visited.

The New Zealanders were, of course, not the first (nor the last) ‘tourists’ to experience this sense of ennui. The Reverend J.J. Malone, touring the Middle East just after the turn of the century, also expressed his growing boredom with the sights and irritation with the people of Egypt. ‘There are...’, he wrote, ‘...365 mosques, or thereabouts, in Cairo, but after visiting a few of the more remarkable, the traveller tires easily of their monotony and the perpetual drain

104 ibid., p.8.
105 ibid., p.10.
106 Eder, p.17. This appears to be a popular summary of Egypt among New Zealand soldiers of both Wars.

To the five ‘esses’ above could also be added ‘sin’, ‘sorrow’ and ‘stinks’. 1AIF also shared in this ‘flurry of alliteration’, see White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, pp.61-62.

upon his exchequer. Everywhere we were pestered with the beggars of backshish and the importunities of guides and officials. ...The reaction is setting in, and we yearn for "rest, rest, only rest". 108 This tourist ennui can be more easily seen in the reaction of one English tourist / traveller, Beverley Nichols, to Alexandria.

Although Alexandria is by no means a sight-seer’s paradise I decided to stay there for a few days, to “get used to the East”, before going on to Cairo. But I found that I was already almost boringly used to it after five minutes’ walk along the promenade. Films, plays, travel books and geographical magazines have robbed all travel of much of its adventure, but the East has suffered more than the rest of the world. ...So platitudeous, so unabashedly “picturesque” are all the street scenes that no commercial photographer would take pictures of them, because the editors would say to him “We’ve seen all this before”...109

Like Malone and Nichols, the New Zealanders also began to grow bored with the sights. By October 1941, 22 Battalion member Reuben Jones found that, having spent the majority of his leave in sightseeing, he had now seen "...very near all there is to see ...in Cairo.” 110 Others expressed similar sentiments. Jim Burrows found that ‘...while in Maadi Camp, we began to take for granted the Great Pyramids of Egypt, which stood out for the whole world to see at Gizeh [sic]...’. 111 For the members of 2 Ammunition Company, while ‘...the pyramids of Giza towered one and a half miles from camp ...familiarity breeds contempt and there were few who took much interest in them’, 112 a reaction they shared with Hugh McVeagh:

I have been in the land of Egypt so long now, that I have become more or less blasé about all its marvels and antiquities etc. Of course, I am expected to write screeds on pyramids, Sphinx, ancient Mosques, and other relics of a vanished civilisation.113

The members of 2(NZ) Division, it has been demonstrated, also grew weary with the people. ‘The “wog”, as we call the low class Egyptian...’, wrote one member of the Divisional Signals, ‘...is the embodiment of everything Egyptian. He lives anywhere and everywhere ...and is for ever looking for something for nothing, “Backsheesh Kiwi, backsheesh”. Until one has been to Cairo and seen the wog, one has not seen filth.’ 114 Their reactions to the Egyptians were complicated by a host of inter-related factors: ideas on race, dirt and disease, all

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108 Malone, The Purple East, pp.120, 123.
109 Nichols, pp.126-127.
110 R.N. Jones to Olive Cotter, 29 October 1941, MS Papers 1756, folder 1, ATL.
112 Lankshear, ‘Unofficial narrative of 2 NZ Ammunition Company’, Ch.8, ‘Maadi 10 April - 22 May’, p.75, WA II, Series 1, DA 105/15/4, NA.
113 H.E. McVeagh to Jack and Jan, 22 June 1940, ‘Personal Letters - 10 Jan. 1940 to 25 June 1945’, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/8, NA.
114 G.S. Snadden to family, 11 January 1943, p.2, Accession 9200081, AM.
created a common negative response to Egypt and Egyptians. But this response was also inextricably linked to their role as tourists. Egypt was ‘...an established tourist centre...’ argues Richard White, ‘...promising not only popularly conventional tourist sights but also an entry into the Other, the Orient with its promise of ...mystery and exotic pleasures. ...But the presence of the people subverted the purity of the Orient.’

Egypt failed to live up to the New Zealanders’ expectations. According to the anonymous author of ‘A Middle East Alphabet’, ‘...“E” is for Egypt - so-called gift of the Nile, with its Sun, Sand and Syphilis and Shit by the pile,’ - this was not what it had promised but was what it was reduced to. This disappointment led Allan Doig, a member of 4 Field Regiment, to write: ‘We left Egypt with no regrets and without ceremony except for the cry with which we were welcomed of “Gibbit Backsheesh” and which is Egypt throughout - from government to guttersnipes. They certainly have made a packet of money out of the Kiwis during our stay here.’

As they left, Second Division’s soldier-tourists vented their frustrations with Egypt.

Land of heat and sweaty sox.
Land of sin and tons of pox.
Streets of sorrow streets of shame
Streets to which I give no name.
Streets of filth and stinking dogs.
Harlots, thieves and pestering Wogs
Clouds of dust that chokes and blinds
And drives us blokes out of our minds.
Aching hearts and aching feet
Gyppo guts and camels’ meat.
The Arab’s heaven - the soldier’s hell
Land of Bastards Fare thee well.

Land of mystery land of the Nile
Land of the Sphinx inscrutable smile
Land of sheiks and tailored clothes
Egyptian Bints in silken dress
Girls dark, and without a care.
Who will entice you if you dare
Dhobies, hawkers, tailor blokes
All come around to scrounge our smokes
Canteen Wogs who squeeze you dry
You’d love to poke them in the eye
The hawker bloke with the dirty photo
Who’s waiting to catch you - when you’re Blotto
So ancient Egypt - new as well
Land of Bastards Fare thee well.

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117 Allan Doig to Joy, 28 October 1943, p.1. [Doig Collection].
118 McLeod, p.117. For other variations of this poem see Accession 9101288, ‘Collection of Poetry by various authors dated 1942-1943’, AM; and ‘Anzac’s Farewell to Egypt’, WA II, Series 1, DA 426/44, NA.
Despite their rather scathing appraisal of 'The Land of Bastards', which led to a questioning of the educative and acculturating opportunities supposedly offered by tourism, it would be in Palestine and Syria where the two seemingly mutually-exclusive roles of tourist and soldier intersected, refreshing their flagging enthusiasm for their 'tour'. Here the 'promise' of the Orient would be kept.
Chapter Five

'KHAKI CLAD TOURISTS'

Eventually we climbed a steep hill commanding an extensive view in both directions along the coast and at the summit we came across the Customs Post on the border of Palestine and Syria. ...There was no hold up at the Customs Post for we were no ordinary tourists and soon we were purring along the coast of Syria, for many of us the seventh foreign country we had been in.¹

For these, the unconventional tourists of 2(NZ) Division, the non-operational period spent in Syria between February and June 1942, would prove to be, in the words of one Unit Historian, ‘...a very pleasant interlude.’2 ‘A new country lay before us...’ declared Colin Armstrong, a gunner with the Division, ‘...and new scenes are ever a panacea for army boredom.’3 As one of the New Zealanders wrote at the time:

We woke up this morning about 0600 hrs and looked out the carriage window to see - green fields, trees, orange groves and above all that long-looked for sight, green hills away in the distance. This was a great tonic to our desert weary eyes.... One was able to imagine in part the emotion of the Jews on sighting this self-same promised land after their forty years wandering in the desert.4

Although the Division had barely spent two years, let alone forty, ‘wandering’ in the desert, it was an apt metaphor - Syria, and in particular Palestine, were indeed, to the members of 2(NZ) Division, the ‘Promised Land[s]’. Having been involved in a number of disastrous campaigns, culminating in the costly actions during the ‘Crusader’ campaign of 1941, the Division was badly in need of rest, reinforcements and re-equipment. By the time the Division was withdrawn from action on 2 December 1941, nearly a quarter of the Division were casualties.5 ‘As early as August 1941 the division was warned to prepare for a move to Syria...’ recorded 2(NZ) Division’s War Narrative, ‘...and though this order was cancelled almost immediately, rumours of a move to “green fields” persisted.’6 For the members of 28(Maori) Battalion, for example: ‘Cairo was beginning to pall and cash was becoming very scarce. Little by little the word “Syria” crept into the conversation. Yes, definitely the Division was going to Syria tomorrow, next week, soon.’7 Three times, however, the decision to withdraw the Division from action had been deferred, no doubt fuelling further speculation, and it was not until 26 February 1942 that the Division began its promised move to Syria.8

For the tourists within the Division’s ranks, the move heralded further opportunities for sight-seeing and recreation, not only in Syria, but also in Palestine - places with an established place on the tourist trail. ‘...Syria and more especially Palestine ...now attract an increasing

2 Walker, ‘War Narrative, 2 NZ Division’, vol.7, part 1 ‘Syria 1 Jan. - June 1942’, preface, WA II, Series 1, DA 401.2/2, NA.
4 Johnson, diary, Friday 13 March 1942, WA II, Series 1, DA 441.26/3, NA.
5 McLeod, p.48.
6 Walker, ‘War Narrative, 2 NZ Division’, vol.7, part 1, p.14, WA II, Series 1, DA 401.2/2, NA.
7 Cody, 28 (Maori) Battalion, p.180.
number of tourists every year...’, declared Karl Baedeker, author and publisher of the well-known series of travellers’ guides. ‘The peculiar characteristics of the East and its rich and varied colouring are seen, it is true, to better advantage in Egypt: but the chief attraction of a visit to Palestine and Syria lies in their historical associations....’9 As in Egypt, the ‘historical associations’ of these countries promised, to the New Zealanders, entry into the mysterious, the exotic and especially in Palestine, the spiritual. Unlike Egypt, however, Palestine and Syria would not prove to be as much of a disappointment. The process by which the New Zealanders became disillusioned with Egypt was not to be repeated here; in Syria, and most especially in Palestine, these promises would be kept.

Once again circumstances were such that the New Zealanders could be viewed as tourists, for their arrival in Syria resembled that of tourists on a package holiday. From El Kehir, a transit camp south of Haifa, the majority of the Division were transported to Syria in a convoy of buses. ‘[T]he battalion piled into a fleet of civilian buses...', recorded 28(Maori) Battalion’s history, ‘...eased back in the unfamiliar luxury of comfortable seats, and admired the scenery...’10, a sentiment echoed in the Division’s War Narrative: ‘Fifty-two civilian buses were supplied to take the party via Nazareth and Tiberias to Damascus. The buses ...were appreciated by the men for their upholstered seats and general comfort after the rough travel of army trucks...’.11 Indeed, for Thomas Birks, it was a ‘...very interesting trip, particularly through Palestine and would have been worth paying for as a civilian.'12

Like Egypt, Syria and Palestine were ambiguous, containing elements associated with both the ‘East’ and the ‘West’. Together with Egypt, to some observers within 2(NZ) Division (and also Karl Baedeker), they were part of the ‘mysterious East’.

The Syrian border was crossed at 1130 hrs on 9 April and a halt was made for the night at Damascus transit camp where leave was granted until 2215 hrs to give all ranks an opportunity to take a brief glimpse of the mysterious East, which for most before had only existed outside Egypt in their imagination.13

Certainly, as was the case in Egypt, Syria and Palestine contained all of the elements which the troops could associate with the ‘East’ of their imagination. Travelling through the desert, en route to Syria, 1st Ammunition Company described it as:

10 Cody, *28 (Maori) Battalion*, p.182.
11 Walker, ‘War Narrative, 2 NZ Division’, vol.7, part 1, p.19, WA II, Series 1, DA 401.2/2, NA.
12 Birks to his mother, letter #55, 13 April 1942, p.1, MS 1413, folder 3, box 1, AJM.
Francis Jackson saw ‘...dark, smelly streets, very similar to those of Cairo, Alexandria, Aden, Colombo, and all eastern towns...’, while Humphrey Dyer, writing to his son, described Jerusalem: ‘Everything there has an old-world look – bearded men with flowing robes, donkeys, and little shops filled with Eastern things.’ Edmund White found that Jerusalem’s history went ‘...far enough back to suit the majority of tourists, me included. The most interesting spot, to my mind at least, was King David’s town - the bazaars. This is the chief emporium of retail trade in any Eastern city....’ Damascus too, ‘...looked an interesting city...’, wrote one member of 25 Battery, ‘...reputed to be the oldest in the world, many fine old mosques with gold-tipped minarets pointing skywards, temples and bazaars....’ The mandatory ‘Eastern’ architecture and street life, the deserts and ubiquitous sheikh-like characters in ‘flowing robes’ which were necessary to conform to convention, were all present and were supplemented by the region’s historical and biblical associations. These associations had led one World War One unit historian to note:

It is interesting to record that, in their passage across the Sinai Desert, the New Zealanders traversed the ancient caravan route between Egypt and Palestine over which in Biblical times Joseph and Mary travelled with the infant Christ. This way was also taken by Napoleon in 1799, the New Zealand Brigade watering at Katia at Napoleon’s wells.

A generation later, these same biblical and historical connections also drew similar comments from the New Zealanders. The official history of the New Zealand Chaplains explained:

The Division’s route through Palestine to Syria ran by the Sea of Galilee and through Damascus, and on all sides there was an immediate quickening of interest in the history of the places and the general background of the Bible. This interest continued in Syria. There were many signs of previous civilisations which demanded attention: the huge ruins of Baalbek and Palmyra, the fortified villages, the Crusaders’ castles, and the great water wheels were all objects of discussion and inquiry.
Many of the troops appear to have shared the chaplains' opinions. 'An H.V. Morton would derive great interest and enjoyment from a slow drive along the coast road connecting Haifa with Beirut...', declared Sergeant L.B. Sandford, a member of 2NZEF Public Relations Service, '...for the land is steeped in history, stretching as far back as 3000 BC.... Everywhere there is evidence, mostly in the form of ruins, of a power and glory long since faded.' Likewise, Colin Armstrong saw that there was '...nothing modern about these villages, things go on in much the same way as they did a thousand years ago...', while John Atkinson, a member of the Divisional Signals, found that the countryside '...abounded in memories from the past, with Baalbek with its ruins, holding pride of place, dating from the dawn of civilisation. Old water wheels...creaked out their antiquity.'

To other observers, Syria and Palestine were similar to Egypt in that they contained both antiquity and modernity, a mix of 'East' and 'West'. 'We passed an old Napoleonic camping site...', wrote one New Zealand nurse, '...and to the coast where...old Crusader buildings and the newer township mingled with old Roman fortresses, Turkish minarets and French citadels....' John Hood, likewise, found that Jerusalem '...was not the Jerusalem I had pictured by any means. The first impression is of a town with good modern streets and some very fine buildings.' Hood and others were similarly impressed by the Hebrew University, Hadassah Hospital and Jewish Museum. Francis Jackson described Jerusalem as both 'modern and ancient...divided one from the other by age-old customs which date back thousands of years before the birth of Christ. ...Beautiful newly-erected buildings now stand where once stood the narrow dark hovels of half a century ago...'; while 26 Battalion member Robert Simpson saw the Lebanese port of Tripoli as

...two cities in one. The New and the Old. The very Western and the very Eastern. In one will be fine modern buildings, offices, shops, warehouses, churches, flats and the hotels for visitors. In the other the low set houses built higgledy-piggledy for all the world like a rabbit warren.

Unlike Egypt, where sight-seeing had been, for the New Zealanders, ruined by an obtrusive local population, in Palestine and Syria only very rarely did the locals figure in the

20 L.B. Sandford, 'Fourteen Day's Leave in the Lebanon, Syria and Palestine November 1942', p.1, WA II, Series 1, DA 441.26/2, NA. [H.V. Morton was the author of a popular series of travelogues.]
23 Hood, p.8, MS Papers 2159, folder 1. ATL.
24 ibid., p.36; Fleming, 3 December 1942, "Dear Cousin - Cheerio, Fred", p.24.
25 Jackson, p.79.
26 Simpson to Patricia A. Talbott, 17 March 1943, p.7, MS Papers 4052, ATL.
New Zealanders' narratives. Here, they remained largely in the background, providing picturesque figures in 'biblical' or 'Eastern' scenes. 'To see a flock of brown and white sheep being tended by an Arab in native dress...,' wrote John Hood, '...brought back memories of Sunday School days...', while for members of 21 Battalion, the head-dress of the Arabs '...was identical with that in the illustrated biblical storybooks of childhood days....' 27 John Blythe, in Soldiering On, recalled a similar scene.

On Christmas Day we visited Bethlehem where outside in the street I stopped startled at the sight of a man in robes approaching with a lamb in his arms; an exact replica of one of those biblical pictures I brought home from Sunday School as a child. 28

'Biblical pictures' were not the only images brought to mind. Divisional Petrol Company, en route to Gaza, found that 'Arabs started to appear on the scene, a different type from the Wogs and Bedouins we were used to in Egypt - mainly because they were better clothed and seemed much cleaner.' 29 The staff of 3 General Hospital recorded similar reactions. 'The very Arabs striding through the countryside, or in the towns we passed, held themselves nobly upright, with their clean-cut aristocratic features, and looked like men with a fine and sturdy independence; so different from the Egyptian fellahin with their crushed and broken spirits.' 30 Generally, these were positive images - there were no 'wogs' or 'Gypsos' here. 'We realised that we were now in Trans-Jordan, Lawrence's country...,' wrote Major E.H. Halstead, '...we would have to drop that wog outlook on the Arabs - they were different to their Egyptian cousins.' 31 This perceived difference was explained by Lt. Col. Scoullar:

...the troops saw that the Syrian and Lebanese Arabs were superior in intelligence, had greater stamina and were more independent than the mobs of Cairo, the hangers-on around Maadi, and the fellahen of the Delta. ...In all their work and play they conduct[ed] themselves with a dignity, a reserve and courtesy which [were] ...in marked contrast to the servility of the Arabs in Egypt. 32

While Cairo had 'mobs' and 'hangers-on', in Syria '[t]he troops without doubt ...[had] much more respect for the independence, honesty and pride of race apparent in the Syrian natives despite the prevalence of poverty ...as an incentive [sic] for dishonesty, begging and sharp practices, than was ever held for the natives of Egypt.' 33 This 'respect' may have been

27 Hood, p.4, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL; J.F. Cody, 21 Battalion, Wellington: War History Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1953, p.148.
28 Blythe, p.27.
29 Kidson, p.123.
30 Somers Cocks, p.131.
31 Halstead, p.3, WA II, Series 1, DA 447.263/1, NA.
32 Scoullar, p.32.
33 '22 NZ Battalion unit historical records', p.86, WA II, Series 1, DA 55/15/3, NA.
due to the difficult situation in Syria, in which the New Zealanders found themselves. 'In the morning...'
 wrote 28(Maori) Battalion's Official Historian, '...Colonel Dyer lectured the battalion on the complicated military and political situation in Syria. ...He told the men that the Lebanon ...and Syria ...were militarily one country divided into two republics lately subject to France but now nominally independent. There had been fighting between the Vichy forces and British, Australian, and Free French troops prior to the establishment of the republics, while in the mountain regions, the Lebanese and Syrians, with a long history of banditry behind them, theied arms from either side with complete impartiality.'34 Indeed, as the Australian forces had found earlier in the campaign: 'Most of them [the local population] sided actively with neither one side nor the other, ...and adopted a friendly policy to whichever side occupied their town or village - a policy no doubt deeply ingrained in the people of a country which had been for centuries a battleground.'35 Relations were further complicated by the political aspirations of the Syrians themselves, who desired independence, not only from Vichy France, but from France itself, and who were also distrustful of Britain which was seen to have betrayed the Syrian-Arab cause following World War One - a factor further complicated by British attitudes towards Jewish-Arab rivalry in Palestine.36 In historian Albert Hourani’s opinion, the Lebanese and Syrian people:

...tended to think that, although the belligerents might invoke the noblest of principles to justify their taking up arms, in reality all were equally moved by self-interest, and that from the point of view of the exploited nations of the East there was nothing to choose between the oppression exercised in the name of democracy and that exercised in the name of Fascism.37

Hence the New Zealanders found themselves, according to Lt. Col. Scoullar, '...in an invidious position. ...[T]hey were aware that they represented a nation which had conquered the country but which had no desire to appear as conqueror. Nor could the forces assume the guise of liberators. ...The population could see little difference between the new administration and that of the past which they disliked.'38 Because of this 'invidious position', the tourists of

34 Cody, 28 (Maori) Battalion, pp.182-183. For a detailed account of the Allied intervention in Syria, see
Gavin Long, Greece, Crete and Syria, Canberra: The Australian War Memorial, 1953, pp.320-548. See also
Gavin Long, The Six Years War: A Concise History of Australia in the 1939-45 War, Canberra: The
35 Long, Greece, Crete and Syria, p.521.
36 Scoullar, p.31. For an account of British intervention in Palestine, see David Hirst, The Gun and the Olive
Branch: The Roots of Violence in the Middle East, London: Futura, 1977, pp.15-108. [I would like to
thank Dr. Brian Moloughney for this reference.]
37 Cited in Long, Greece, Crete and Syria, p.323.
38 Scoullar, pp.30-31.
2(NZ) Division could not be as self-assured as they had been in Egypt; here, as tourists, they did not always reign supreme.

There were, however, a number of other factors which also may have influenced the New Zealanders’ attitudes towards their ‘hosts’. The primary role of the Division in Syria was, in simple terms, to guard against an attack from the north, through Turkey. In addition to this task, ‘...a not unimportant function [was] ...to foster goodwill and friendly relations between the local natives and the troops and to establish general respect for the Allied cause...’ a task for which, in the opinion of the Divisional Cavalry’s official history, the New Zealanders were ‘...eminently suited....’ A number of memoirs and official histories contain examples of the New Zealanders’ presumed suitability for this task. The official history of the Divisional Cavalry, for example, recounts one incident where ‘...the inhabitants of Djedeide were amazed one evening to see a little old woman, still protesting volubly, arrive home accompanied by a soldier who was carrying for her an enormous load of firewood....’

This, and similar accounts, are examples of what Jock Phillips has described as the public or official mythology of the New Zealand soldier in war. Phillips traces the development of the public image of the New Zealand soldier, an image which had its origins in the Boer War. By World War Two, he argues, ‘...the traditions built up from the Boer and Great Wars were well entrenched.’ The members of 2(NZ) Division ‘...knew what New Zealanders at war were supposed to be like and these expectations must have coloured both their perceptions and behaviour.’ This is not to say that the image remained static over time, for as he demonstrates, ‘...much of the mythology from the war [World War Two] merely represents an updating in a new setting. Traditions are developed and enriched, rather than transformed.’

The public image of the members of 2(NZ) Division (which as Phillips has pointed out, was one which they themselves subscribed to) retained many of the elements of that of the soldiers in the Boer and Great Wars. ‘New Zealand soldiers...’, in his analysis, ‘...were presented as sturdy and strong pioneers, but also as gentlemen, restrained and courteous in all their behaviour.’

40 ibid., p.85. [See also Scoullar, p.30.]
42 ibid., pp.174-175.
There was a continued emphasis upon the rural origins of the New Zealand soldiers. It is the back-country, the untamed frontier of bush and mountains and single men, which is claimed to be responsible for the typical New Zealand man. But by World War II the frontier had become a myth; a majority of New Zealand soldiers were from towns and cities not the backblocks - and so the untamed frontier, in exaggerated virile form, became acceptable as myth.

Admittedly, this image of the New Zealand soldiers of World War Two also contained elements quite different to those of their predecessors - including an acceptance of previously repressed ‘larrikan’ behaviour - but ‘[t]here was a continued claim that despite their rowdiness, the New Zealanders were “gentlemen of the heart”, natural innocents who were generous and protective of those in need.’ Hence, despite this cruder image promulgated unofficially (and sometimes officially), the soldiers of 2(NZ) Division were perceived to be, and more importantly, perceived themselves to be ‘...knight[s] of the frontier - the gallantry, bravery, heroism, self-discipline, and chivalric behaviour of the English-public-school ideal united with the initiative and physical capacities of the pioneer.’

It appears that these ‘knights of the frontier’ had a begrudging respect for the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian populations they encountered. Unlike their rather scathing appraisals of the Egyptians, the New Zealanders tended to view these groups in a more favourable light (especially the Syrians they encountered), emphasising their martial and ‘manly’ qualities. Indeed, there is an interesting degree of similarity between descriptions of the Syrian and Palestinian populations provided by members of 2(NZ) Division and those provided by New Zealand soldiers in Sinai and Palestine during World War One. The Mounted Rifles Brigade encountered ‘hundreds’ of Arabs, ‘...all armed to the teeth, nominally on the British side, but ...actually out for whatever loot they could get from either side. They were treacherous but picturesque ruffians, nearly all carrying modern high velocity rifles, one or two bandoliers, and a profusion of wicked looking knives.’ A generation later, Pat Kane found Kurdish men to be ‘...a tough virile group. All carry firearms of some description. A knife and a cartridge belt seem a necessary adjunct to their baggy trousers and Arab headdress. All carry sinister knives of varying shapes thrust in their cartridge belts.’

A further factor in the New Zealanders’ generally positive perception of the peoples they encountered in Palestine and Syria was, as Briscoe Moore’s description suggests, that although they may have been ‘ruffians’ - they were picturesque ruffians. ‘Wild-looking horsemen, burnous-covered and carrying rifles,’ to John Blythe, ‘were picturesque in the extreme, even to

46 ibid., p.200.
47 ibid., pp.210-211.
49 Briscoe Moore, pp.107-108.
50 Kane, p.11.
our no-longer suburban eyes accustomed to the kaleidoscopic polyglot of Cairo...."51 The people of Palestine and Syria conformed to the New Zealanders’ preconceived images of what Arabs ‘should’ look like and do; which was in stark contrast to the squalor and clamour of Cairo’s native population. The supposed benefits of rural life over urban, which were central to the myth the New Zealanders believed of themselves, were extended to these Palestinians and Syrians.

...I thought well of various Arabs and Bedouins, but not of the Cairenes, who seemed to us and to our fathers before us to be a race of thieves, rogues and gulli-gulli [sic] men. ...We wrote off the city dwellers as a dead loss; they seemed to be little more than rogues who spent their lives in the streets...52

In general, these tourists of 2(NZ) Division made little effort to discriminate between the various groups they encountered in Syria and Palestine. Those who did seek to draw a distinction often did so on the basis of differences in dress or religious affiliation. One member of 2 Ammunition Company noted that in Syria ‘...there was a marked change in the peasant clothing. Instead of the Arab shirt which reaches the ankles, the Syrians wore a peculiar kind of baggy trousers fastened at the knees or ankles which suggested an adoption of the garb of the “Terrible Turk” depicted in childhood picture books.’53 In Palestine, however, the New Zealanders seemed more aware of the presence of a non-‘Arab’ population, perhaps, as 28(Maori) Battalion’s history had suggested, because they had received lectures on the political situation there or because some of the Jewish population were discernibly ‘European’ and therefore more easily distinguished from the local ‘Arab’ population. Typically, the soldier-tourists confined their comments to observations on differences in appearance, 28(Maori) Battalion’s official history, for example, noting that ‘...the desert gave gradual way to cultivations where Jews in modern dress worked among Arabs whose garments were still cut on a two-thousand-year-old pattern.’54 Some of the more observant, such as Colin Armstrong, did attempt to differentiate the population. In Jerusalem, he wrote, ‘...the cradle of the Christian church, there are many sects represented....’ He then went on to list them; orthodox Jews ‘...wearing one long curl of hair down each cheek...’, Greek orthodox, Russian, Armenian, Latin ‘...divided into many orders...’, Coptic, Abyssinian. He also found ‘[t]he Arab is well represented for Jerusalem is a holy city to him as well so that the population ...

51 Blythe, p.32.
54 Cody, 28 (Maori) Battalion, p.181.
probably as cosmopolitan as one could wish to find anywhere in the world.’ A small number of the more politically aware New Zealanders did comment on the current political situation. Lt. Col. J.M. Mitchell of 7 Anti-Tank Regiment, wrote:

I haven’t mentioned the Arab-Jewish problem and intend to say but little about it here. It is sufficient to mention that the Jews have done a lot to make the country what it is today. ...[A]ll the Palestinian police (ex-British servicemen) I have spoken to...say that there is certain to be a big bust up after the war and that their sympathies are with the Arabs.

It would appear that Mitchell’s sympathies were also ‘with the Arabs’, as, despite his intentions to say ‘but little’ on the subject, he concluded his comments with:

In the meantime they [the Jews] are making money in a safe refuge under the guarding hand of Britain, robbing whoever may come their way, be it Arab, Briton or Jew. ...I have found that the Jews are not keen to assist in any way, unless there is some profit to be found in it for them.

Of course, the New Zealanders had made similar complaints about the Arabs and the ‘entrepreneurial’ groups that they had encountered in Egypt. While they had an almost universal contempt for the ‘Arabs’ of Egypt, they found no inconsistency in describing the ‘Arabs’ they encountered in Syria and Palestine in more glowing terms. They were to be congratulated on conforming to the New Zealand tourists’ preconceived images of Arabs, as they ‘strode’ through the countryside, holding themselves ‘nobly upright’ with their ‘aristocratic’ features. ‘You will find...’, counselled H.G. Dyer, ‘...that you can trust men who are men, like the Arabs [of Palestine and Syria].’ Some, like John Kennedy, did seek explanations for these perceived differences; ‘...perhaps...’, he wrote, ‘...as they live in a colder land [they] appear more intelligent than the Gyppo.

But not all commentators were prepared to be as generous in their descriptions, which suggests that the undifferentiating nature of the tourist’s vision was still operating here. Divisional Petrol Company’s unit history recorded the theft of a tent from company lines in early April, adding the comment that it was ‘...a reminder that we were still in Arab territory

56 J.M Mitchell to family, 13 June 1943, p.3, ‘Extracts from letters concerning a journey through Syria and Palestine and action of 7 NZ A/Tk. Regt. during Egyptian Campaign, 13 June to 11 September 1942’, WA II, Series 1, DA 442.2/5, NA.
57 See Somers-Cocks, p.131. [Cited previously].
58 Dyer, p.53.
59 Kennedy to family, 16 March 1942, p.3, MS Papers 1449, folder 3, ATL. This ‘climatic’ explanation was also provided by Allan Doig. ‘In hotter regions closer to the Equator you get the hotter temperaments, and the further north you get are the more moderate climates and more moderate temperament.’ Allan Doig, interview, Dunedin, 29 June 1995.
and thus among thieves,'\textsuperscript{60} while Lt.-General Sir Edward Puttick, 25 Battalion’s official historian, observed:

Because of the poverty in Syria, and possibly because of the banditry outlook over the centuries of some of its people, pilfering of army stores was prevalent, so creating at least one similarity with Egypt.\textsuperscript{61}

There were other similarities with Egypt of a more conventional type. Syria, as the chaplains’ official history had suggested, also contained a number of ruins and ‘signs of previous civilisations’ which attracted the attention of the New Zealand soldier-tourists. One sergeant ‘...had a look round the bazaars [in Damascus], made a few purchases ...[and then] had a look at the Omayad Mosque and the Tombs of John the Baptist and Saladin...’ Later he took a sight-seeing trip by truck to Acre and Haifa, stopping on the way to view the aqueducts and Crusader era ruins.\textsuperscript{62}

The mosques, aqueducts, water-wheels, castles, fortified towns and temple ruins all drew comment, with the ruins at Baalbek and Palmyra considered the most impressive, but these were, however, generally less well-known than similar attractions in Egypt. The travel writer H.V. Morton had likened the ruins at Baalbek to those of the Temple of Karnak at Thebes in Egypt, and in his opinion, ‘[e]very student of the Bible ought to see them. Their strength even in decay is astonishing.’\textsuperscript{63} The New Zealanders were also impressed by what they saw. To Lt. Col. Mitchell the ruins at Baalbek were one of the seven wonders of the world, an opinion which he shared with fellow regiment member James Young, while 26 Battalion member, Rex Griffith, wrote to his family that the ruins ‘... must have been a great sight when the temples were intact. The marvel is how they were built and how the stone blocks were carted there....’\textsuperscript{64}

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\textsuperscript{60} Kidson, p.191.
\textsuperscript{63} H.V Morton, \textit{In the Steps of The Master}, London: Rich & Cowan, 1934, p.259. [For an appraisal of this work see, Fussell, \textit{Abroad}, p.55. ‘In its day...’, Fussell writes ‘...it was an important bourgeois devotional classic and sold 210 000 copies the first two years’, p.55.]
\textsuperscript{64} Mitchell to family, 13 June 1943, p.1, WA II, Series 1, DA 442.2/5, NA; James Young to Muriel McGregor, 29 April 1942, p.5, MS Papers 91-136, folder 2, ATL; Rex Dennis Griffith to family, 30 August 1942, p.5, MS Papers 2252, folder 1, ATL.
\end{flushleft}
Have seen another place that certainly came up to all my expectations though, Baalbek, which I had a chance to get a good look at. ...Whatever may have been its faults their religion must have meant a good deal to those people to cause them to expend on those temples the labour of centuries and to produce places of such grace and lightness and architectural perfection.65

In general, the New Zealanders responded to these sights (as they had to similar sights in Egypt) as tourists. These were sights to be seen, to marvel at; and with the exception of Thomas Birks and a few others, that was the extent of their impact on the New Zealanders. As has been suggested, this sort of tourism enabled them (and other soldier and civilian tourists) to remain detached from the real life of the place.66 With the exception of one of the New Zealand brigades which, for the duration of the Division’s time in Syria, was always on the Turkish border and headquartered in Aleppo, the bulk of the Division was stationed round Baalbek.67 For these troops, as 28(Maori) Battalion’s official history suggested, Baalbek’s ruins could only hold the attention of the majority of the Division’s sightseers for a short period of time.

There was local leave to Baalbek, where Divisional Headquarters was established, but once an afternoon had been spent exploring the ruins of ancient temples there was little else to do besides sampling the local brew.68

There were, however, other attractions at Baalbek for the New Zealanders, including ‘...a number of cafés in bounds to the troops, as well as two brothels and, later on, a swimming bath.’69 Syria’s geography also offered recreational activities which were not available in Egypt, with skiing becoming a popular form of training and sport. ‘Such was the general keenness on ski training...’, recorded the Division’s War Narrative ‘...that, with official approval, the 18 NZ Battalion ran a school of its own. [The Divisional Cavalry] ...also made use of the snow slopes..., groups hiring skis in Baalbek and going up to the hills for the day’70, a pastime which ‘Shorty’ Lovegrove, a member of the Divisional Cavalry recalled with pleasure - little wonder then that he would later write: ‘We, the Regiment, only stayed in Syria for three months - a pleasant holiday and many interesting things to do and see.’71

65 Birks to his mother, letter #58, 3 May 1942, p.7, 10, MS 1413, folder 3, box 1, AIM.
66 White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.53. See also Barthes, pp.74-77.
67 Underhill, et al., pp.44, 47.
68 Cody, 28 (Maori) Battalion, p.186.
69 Walker, ‘War Narrative, 2 NZ Division’, vol.7, part 1, p.72, WA II, Series 1, DA 401.2/2, NA. The popularity of the brothels is indicated by the fact that 4 Field Ambulance administered 1400 prophylactic treatments each week to one brigade group of about 5000-6000 men. McLeod, p.132.
71 Lovegrove, p.43.
Figure 12 - "Method of trout fishing which is frowned upon in recognised sporting circles". New Zealanders on Turkish border, Syria 1942. (Unknown. War History Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ, F2559/4DA)
For many of the other members of 2(NZ) Division, Syria was also a 'pleasant holiday', a fact not lost on some outside observers. The Division's move to Syria coincided with the rapid advance of Japanese forces in the Pacific and led to increasing pressure from within New Zealand, and elsewhere, for the Division to be returned to help defend New Zealand and the Pacific. Those who argued for the Division's retention in the Middle East '...were not helped by the reports supplied to the newspapers of the Division's activities in Syria. These emphasised the Division's garrison role, its recreation and rest, its sightseeing tours and hostels. Even the skiing schools were referred to more as a sport than as military training.'\(^{72}\) This was not, however, a situation unique to 2(NZ) Division. The soldier-tourists of World War One had recorded similar complaints.

It was while ...having brief spells from the Jordan Valley, that most of our men got the opportunity of seeing Jerusalem. ...Of the many photographs sent back to New Zealand by men of the Mounted Brigade most were of historical spots such as seen round about Jerusalem. ...From this some people seemed to derive the impression that the Mounted Riflemen were having some sort of a 'Cook's tour'.\(^{73}\)

Despite these protestations to the contrary, it was in Syria and Palestine where the two seemingly mutually exclusive identities of soldier and tourist overlapped; and for some of the members of 2(NZ) Division, it was difficult to see which was primary. Compared with the Division's activities since its arrival in Egypt, the relative peace and inactivity in Syria coupled with the long-awaited change of scenery for those suffering from the long-term tourist's complaint of boredom or ennui, could persuade not only outside observers, but many of the troops themselves, that they were indeed soldier-tourists.

The weather is beautiful now, spring, and the days are sunny and hot, and accompanied by a cloudless sky while the air is a continuous hum from the beetles, bugs and bees busily gathering the nectar from numerous spring flowers. The fertile plains are a mass of green crops all rapidly responding to Old Sol's warmth and life giving rays. It seems incredible that only a few hundred miles away there is a battle front where those engaged in conflict only dream of these conditions and daily they seek one another's blood to pour on mother earth.\(^{74}\)

Indeed, as 28(Maori) Battalion's history had suggested, sedate sightseeing at Baalbek rapidly gave way to more sedative pastimes.

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72 Scouller, p.37. For a list of hotels, their tariffs, numbers of rooms and beds etc., which were in bounds to the New Zealanders in Damascus, Beirut and Baalbek, see 'HQ 2NZ Div. (A+Q Branch) Hotels, Clubs etc. 2 [Jan.] 42 - 2 [Apr.] 42', WA II, Series 1, DA 21.1/9/1/1, NA.

73 Briscoe Moore, pp.126-127.

74 Stewart, p.71, WW II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA. [My emphasis].
Drunkenness had become general and leave parties returning from Baalbek were just so many truckloads of inert limbs. ...Had this state of affairs lasted it would not have been long before the general condition of many of the boys would call for medical attention. Quite rightly the authorities stepped in; after all there is a war on.\footnote{E.A. Howard, diary, Weds. 20 May [1942], 'Diary 1941-1942', p.84, WA II, Series 1, DA 441.2/1, NA. [Emphasis in the original].}

Syria’s proximity to Palestine also offered many New Zealanders the opportunity to tour what was arguably one of the most ‘familiar’ of all tourist destinations, the ‘Holy Land’. Organised tours to Palestine had been offered almost since their arrival in Egypt, while many of the troops also arranged independent tours of the country while on leave.\footnote{See, for example; Fleming, 31 October 1940, “Dear Cousin - Cheerie, Fred”, pp.3-4; Blythe, p.26; Hood, pp.2-3; MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL; Rex Griffith, letters, MS Papers 2252, ATL.} For numerous New Zealanders, leave in Palestine was a mixture; part tour, part pilgrimage, but unlike Egypt, where the religious sights had proved to be uninspiring - competing as they did with more (to the tourists) glamorous sights - Palestine’s religious sights proved more difficult to ignore.

You will be gathering the impression that I have suddenly turned a true Christian. Far from it. I’m just a hypocrite but one feels deeply touched when one sees these things and has them explained. You seem to be carried away when you close your eyes and you have a pictorial image of those days dancing in your mind. Even the roughest and toughest of men would weaken into prayer in these parts.\footnote{Stewart, p.64, WW II, Series 1, DA 442/6, NA.}

Others had similar reactions. ‘It’s a rather frightening feeling...’ concurred Francis Jackson, ‘...to think you may now be treading on the same ground as did Christ, or perhaps one of his disciples.’\footnote{Jackson, p.82.}

Just as Egypt was ‘familiar’ to the New Zealanders through a host of historical and cultural connotations, so too was Palestine. The presence of New Zealand troops in Palestine during World War One had, no doubt, added to popular perceptions of the region - perceptions based largely upon Palestine’s religious history (as the Holy Land). As the official history of the Egyptian campaign noted:

In the sum of its travels the Division saw part of Siaai, over which the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade had fought in 1916, the coastal regions of Palestine, Lebanon, and finally Syria to the border of Turkey. ...There was a general awareness among the troops that they were passing over storied ground, but, whatever else they had in their equipment, a wide knowledge of biblical and military history was not included. But men who could fit modern place names to biblical stories found ready audiences.\footnote{Scouller, pp.22-23.}
Although on the whole, the New Zealanders did not possess a ‘wide knowledge’ of Biblical and military history, nonetheless, some were conscious of these associations. John Hood wrote that ‘...the country we had passed through... saw some fine work by the Australian Light Horse in the last war...’, while another soldier hoped to ‘...get a snap of [Gaza] on the way back as of course it was the scene of some heavy fighting during the Great War....’80 It was however, Palestine’s biblical associations which were the most familiar to the troops, and which drew the most comment. Clem Hollies, a member of 21 Battalion, recalled that it was ‘...great to visit all the Biblical places I had heard about...’; likewise, Fred Fleming wrote that ‘...the time we spent in the Holy Land was well worthwhile for we visited most of the famous Holy places mentioned in the Bible’; and for John Hood it was ‘...the country where I had come to see the many places of interest which had been mentioned in the Bible so many hundreds of years ago.’81 Palestine’s associations with a ‘Western’ religion, Christianity, captivated many of the New Zealanders’ imaginations. One even went so far as to compare the Division’s move from Egypt with the Biblical flight of the Israelites.

...we headed north along the canal road ...and set out into the Sinai. A succession of thoughts, images and ideas coursed through me as we left the canal. -It was a great adventure and I felt elated - here we were, actually fleeing from Egypt just as Moses and the Chosen People did 2000 years ago.82

Of course, as Lt. Col. Scouller had pointed out, not all the ‘pilgrims’ were able to locate the exact significance of what they saw. John Kennedy, for example, had a friend who ‘...pointed out Mt. Carmel to me early in the trip - it is of course of Biblical significance though we were trying to recall just where it comes into things.’83 For John Blythe, this lack of knowledge hampered his appreciation of his visit to Jerusalem. He ‘...could not escape the fact that a visit to the Holy City was wasted on people like me; I was too ignorant to really appreciate it.’84 The supposed educative function of tourism and the tour meant that it became important not only to ‘see’ the Holy Land, but also to demonstrate that one ‘knew’ about it as well. For these soldiers, guides in the form of local religious or the 2NZEF chaplains became an important part of their touring experience. Reuben Jones, convalescing after being wounded at Ruweisat Ridge, went on one of the numerous sightseeing trips to Palestine organised by the convalescent depot. These trips were very popular among the troops at the New Zealand rest

80 Hood, p.17, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL; Cpl. R.T. Bishop, diary, Sunday 19 January [1942?], Accession 9201076/2, AM.
81 Clem Hollies, ‘Infantryman: With the 2nd New Zealand Division in World War Two, 1939-1945’, Unpublished Manuscript, AM; Fleming, 31 October 1940, “Dear Cousin - Cheerio, Fred”, p.3; Hood, p.4, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
82 Halstead, p.1, WA II, Series 1, DA 447.263/1, NA.
83 Kennedy to family, 6 March 1942, p.4, MS Papers 1449, folder 1, ATL.
84 Blythe, p.27.
homes, and had led one New Zealand soldier to comment: 'It makes one feel like a tourist instead of a soldier.'

In the afternoon...', Jones wrote, '...we were shown around Jerusalem by a Padre who came with us for the occasion and acted the part of our guide, and we visited most of the old historical places there.' John Hood also joined a guided tour. '[O]ur guide was a Benedictine Brother, and it proved to be a very good one. I have since regretted that it had not been possible to organise my trips so as to take advantage of more of the tours.'

2 Ammunition Company received a brief talk as part of their Sunday services: 'Padre West held a short service, it being Sunday and in a short address, acquainted the company with a few interesting points in the history of the places seen during the day’s journey.'

For their part, the Division’s chaplains appeared to relish the opportunity to divert the soldiers' attentions away from less 'educational' pastimes. The period spent in Syria and the associated time in Palestine '..provided the chaplains with many opportunities for Bible instruction, but it was difficult to give full and precise teaching about every place and many a chaplain thought wistfully of his books of reference and maps at home in New Zealand.' Nonetheless, as the chaplain’s official history admitted, they ‘...ran a kind of tourist office, sending parties off by trucks to places of interest in the surrounding country.’ The chaplains too, were both tour-guides and tourists. A number attended Chaplains’ Courses held at the American University in Beirut where the syllabus included ‘...sightseeing trips as well as lectures, and the chaplains were provided with competent guides for tours of the city of Jerusalem and some of the other holy places in Palestine.’

Leave in Palestine was, therefore, a mixture - part tour and part pilgrimage - a process which continues today. As Dean MacCannell has pointed out:

Traditional religious institutions are everywhere accommodating the movements of tourists. In 'The Holy Land', the tour has followed in the path of the religious pilgrimage and is replacing it. Throughout the world, churches, cathedrals, mosques, and temples are being converted from religious to touristic functions.

Not all the New Zealand tourist-pilgrims appreciated the conversion. 'Visited Holy Places round Jerusalem with the exception of the Garden of Gethsemane...', wrote Major R.M. Bell,

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85 'Middle East Field Censorship summary No. XI, for period 21 Jan. 1942 to 27 Jan. 1942 inclusive', p.7, WA II, Series 2, item 71, NA.
86 R.N. Jones to Olive Cotter, February 1943, MS Papers 1756, folder 1, ATL.
87 Hood, p.31, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
88 Lankshear, 'Unofficial narrative of 2 NZ Ammunition Company', Ch.9, 'Further Trips to Syria', p.50, WA II, Series 1, DA 105/15/4, NA.
89 Underhill, et al., p.44.
90 ibid., p.47.
91 ibid., pp.47-48.
92 MacCannell, p.43.
‘...somewhat sickened at the commercialised religion one sees everywhere.’ Visiting the Garden, John Hood and his party were given a souvenir consisting of an olive leaf from the trees in the Garden, which had been dried and glued into a paper folder. ‘The guide said “The only free thing we would get in Jerusalem”...’, Hood recalled, ‘...He was right too.’ It was a common complaint.

For or some in the Division, it was the reverse of the situation in Egypt. In Egypt, it has been argued, the Christian religious sites were ‘...unexpectedly insignificant.’ Indeed, so unpretentious were the Christian sites that the New Zealanders had difficulty relating to them. It would appear that, like those of 1AIF, the tourists within 2(NZ) Division were ‘...quite unfamiliar with the idea that the mystical could inhabit the pedestrian, the everyday.’ Yet here in Palestine, where ‘[e]very inch of the ground is of interest...’ it was the splendour of the churches and temples which drew negative comment from some quarters.

The Mounted Rifles, in Palestine during World War One, had found ‘[t]he centre of interest [in Jerusalem] is Holy Tomb, an ornate structure housing it under the big dome of the Church [of the Holy Sepulchre]. ...The edifice enclosing the Tomb is to the Western mind somewhat over-decorated,’ while Jerusalem, to Second Division member Hugh McVeagh, ‘...was rather disappointing as there is little or nothing genuine left. I saw everything; the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, the Garden of Gethsemanae [sic], the Mount of Olives, and the Via Dolorosa etc. It was all very interesting, but as I said, not quite genuine.’ Robert McDowall, Chaplain-Major to 2NZEF, also found that he ‘...felt very little of Jesus here. ...Only dimly through the false veneration and the superstition could I sense the great events that meant so much to the world. I couldn’t bear the place, sad though it seems to say it. ...Churches have been built over the ...[site] and the atmosphere of the birth of Christ is buried forever. Gold in plenty is there, stars and whatnot. I felt a heathen that I had little interest in the church, but I couldn’t help it.’

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93 (Maj.) R.M. Bell, ‘Events of Interest and Personal Experiences since the Outbreak of War - September 1939’, p.9, WA II, Series 1, DA 441/7, NA.
94 Hood, p.12, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
95 White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.55. [Emphasis in the original]. This may not be true of all the New Zealand soldier-tourists. It may be worthwhile speculating that for some Maori (and indeed some Pakeha), the idea that the mystical can inhabit the ordinary, was not a ‘foreign’ notion.
97 Briscoe Moore, p.133.
98 McVeagh to mother, 9 October 1941, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/8, NA.
99 McDowall, pp.2-3, MS Papers 5256, ATL.
This Church, with its smoke-stained tapestries and walls hardly conveyed to the visitor a tumbled-down manger and the crib bed. So we left the Church a little disappointed, as I had expected to see something quite different, and this grandeur I could not associate with the humbleness of the life of Jesus Christ.\textsuperscript{100}

Jackson’s comments echoed those of the Mounted Rifles. They, too, had found that ‘...Jerusalem, which might be expected to be one of the most godly cities is ...one of the most material places on earth. An excess of the outward forms and ceremonial of religion seems to have stifled the true spirit ...which Christ strove to impart in these surroundings.’\textsuperscript{101}

For others, it was not the grandeur which detracted from the significance of these sites, spiritual or otherwise. John Hood, already somewhat sceptical about the ‘significance’ of what he was seeing, found that it was ‘...difficult indeed to give an indication [of] the feelings one has when entering these ...chapels, but whatever they may be of the most devout person, I think like mine they would be somewhat jarred by the presence of a gowned Greek Priest in the Chapel of the Tomb of Christ who asked for a donation.’\textsuperscript{102} Hugh Raine ‘...saw various slabs where Mary was supposed to be buried and so on.’ His doubts were further fuelled by the guide who asked for ‘...something for the Church’ which meant 5 ackers, and then ‘something for me’ and that’s 3 ackers and unfortunately that’s the last few remarks one hears when leaving the majority of the wonderful old shrines of the Old City.’\textsuperscript{103}

These were all complaints of the modern tourist. While Paul Fussell and others reproach tourists for their supposed satisfaction with the inauthentic, Jonathan Culler maintains that all tourists do set out in quest of the authentic, especially that which is authentic in its otherness.\textsuperscript{104} To many of the soldier-tourists, the commercialisation of the Holy Land detracted from its authenticity. Modernity has created a belief that authenticity exists only in the past (or in the preserved signs of that past, such as antiques or restored buildings) and the intrusion of the commercial present had ruined the effect for these tourists.\textsuperscript{105} Indeed, nursing sister Joyce Macdonald’s somewhat insightful observation at the time provides a succinct summary of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{100} Jackson, p.84.
\item \textsuperscript{101} Briscoe Moore, p.134.
\item \textsuperscript{102} Hood, pp.9-10, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
\item \textsuperscript{103} Raine to parents, 8 June 1942, pp.3-4, Micro MS 0578, ATL.
\item \textsuperscript{104} Culler, ‘The Semiotics of Tourism’, pp.158-159. Authenticity is, of course, a major selling point in many ‘travel’ advertisements. ‘The idea of seeing the real Spain, the real Jamaica, something unspoiled, how the natives really work or live, is a major touristic topos, essential to the structure of tourism’, writes Culler.
\item ‘...And characteristically tourists emphasise such experiences - moments regarded as authentic - when telling others of their travels.’ Culler, p.159.
\item \textsuperscript{105} ibid., p.160.
\end{itemize}
sightseeing experience for these tourists: ‘...we were just a party of sightseers gazing. I felt we had come to stare and not to worship.’

For others it was simply a matter of faith; once again either religious faith or faith in the guides. ‘We climbed the Mount of Olives and gazed speculatively at the footprint on the floor of a tiny chapel [the Chapel of the Ascension] where Christ supposedly ascended into Heaven...’, recalled John Blythe, ‘...it looked like concrete to me.’ John Hood also shared these misgivings. ‘An indentation in the rock, so we were told, is believed by some to be the mark of the footprint of Christ but we were not asked to believe that.’ Indeed, as Jim Dangerfield recalled: ‘We khaki clad tourists had no way of checking on the truth of the local advertising.’

But not all the New Zealanders were dissatisfied with the ‘real’ Holy Land. ‘We were taken to the Virgin’s Fountain where Mary drew her water. Because this is the only source of water supply in Nazareth we can accept its authenticity...’ declared Signalman G.S. Snadden. He was able to accept the guides’ assurances of the authentic, especially ‘...where the guides can say “This is the place where such and such happened” and not “This is where such and such is supposed to have happened”’. Pat Kane too, found that:

Nothing ...could detract from the wonder and marvel of visiting the Holy Land proper. ...Many servicemen and servicewomen have complained that Jerusalem was commercialised. If that were so I did not notice it. I found Jerusalem wonderful. The miracle of a Christian place of pilgrimage located in the heart of a Moslem state, the Holy Sepulchre housed in a Mohammedan Mosque, a city built in a mountainous tract of barren land, all seemed in keeping with my childhood conceptions of my faith.

For others the authenticity or otherwise of what they saw did not detract from the sights themselves. Faith, or lack of it, did not reduce the sightseeing experience. John Hood, despite his scepticism, could still appreciate them as sights in their own right. Visiting the Chapel of Mary he found the Greek and Catholic chapels (which stood side by side) to be ‘...very beautiful indeed. In the Catholic one is a statue of Mary enclosed in a glass case and the statue is bedecked with precious jewels and gold ornaments which must be worth a tremendous sum.’ At the Church of the Visitation he came across a new church, not yet completed, which stood beside it. ‘When finished this new church promised to be a very beautiful example

106 Macdonald, Away from Home, p.34.
108 Hood, p.29, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
110 G.S. Snadden to family, 31 August 1943, pp.1-2, Accession 9200081, AM.
111 Kane, p.58.
112 Hood, p.10, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
of modern mosaic. At the same time it seemed to me to be rather a pity that such a beautiful piece of work costing a very large sum of money should be built in such a more or less secluded spot.  

‘Few tourists come home from vacation without something to show for it...’, writes Nelson Graburn. ‘The type of vacation chosen and the proof that we really did it reflect what we consider “sacred”. The Holy Grail is the myth sought on the journey, and the success of the holiday is proportionate to the degree that the myth is realised.’ For almost all of the ‘tourists’ of 2(NZ) Division, their ‘sacred journey’ had been an unqualified success. The New Zealanders had arrived in Palestine and Syria as ‘khaki clad tourists’ and most departed (although somewhat hurriedly) satisfied with what they had seen and experienced. The promise of entry into the Other, with its spiritual mystery, had been kept. For those who had come in search of the spiritual, Palestine - the ‘Holy Land’ was literally a ‘Godsend’. Here, almost every feature had some sort of historical or biblical significance - even if was through half-remembered childhood stories - and they took pleasure and derived a sense of accomplishment in participating in what was essentially, a pilgrimage to those sights. ‘Ordinary’ sightseeing took on a new meaning for these pilgrims. Francis Jackson ‘...visited the Holy Sepulchre where Christ had been entombed. The Church is built around the tomb, which forms the centre of the structure. Darkness and decay, rotting wood and rusting ironwork give the place an air of impressive mystery.’ Even souvenirs could have additional meaning. Jim Dangerfield, for example, went to see the Church of the Nativity:

Nearby were numerous bazaars with souvenirs to sell to sightseers. ...Our military rates of pay did not allow for many purchases. One that I did buy [was] ...the mother-of-pearl covered copy of the Holy Bible that is still treasured.

For tourists seeking the authentic and significant in order to meet society’s expectations of the educative and acculturating role of tourism, both Palestine and Syria offered numerous opportunities. Unlike Egypt, where these opportunities had been ruined, for the tourists, by the forceful presence of an active population, here the people were generally referred to in more complimentary terms. The ‘Arabs’ of Syria and Palestine were congratulated on conforming so well to illustrations in the Bible. While the reactions of the New Zealanders to the sights and scenes in both Syria and Palestine were mixed, they were all the typical reactions of tourists. Here, more than anywhere in their tour of the Middle East, the roles of tourist and soldier

113 ibid., pp.32-33.
115 Jackson, p.83.
117 The fellaheen of Egypt also received such compliments from 1AIF only to be scorned later when they did not remain passive objects of the tourist gaze. See White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.56.
overlapped to such a degree, that it was difficult to see, from their comments, which was primary. They had, once again, arrived as tourists, and leaving for Egypt the New Zealanders wrote home describing their journeys and ‘Grand Tours’; and their comments were indeed those of satisfied tourists. Edmund White ‘...thoroughly enjoyed every moment of my sojourn in the “Land of the Bible” ’, and Hugh Butler also ‘...had a wonderful time... and I certainly saw the sights.’118 For E.S. Hicks it was an unforgettable experience.

...visited Palestine and Syria and Jerusalem - which was a glorious trip. I made the most of time and visited everywhere possible even up as far as Haifa. The tour took us through all the old synagogues and temples of Christ, the Mount of Olives and tombs of all descriptions, a wonderful trip and one, one will not ever forget.119

Their comments were in stark contrast to those made of Egypt. The period in Syria and Palestine had proven to be, for the Division’s soldier-tourists, a far more satisfactory ‘tour’ for a number of reasons. Although officially there to defend against a possible attack through Turkey by Axis forces, it was a period of relative inactivity, a respite from the rigours of the desert campaign; and hence, their role as soldiers became less intrusive, less primary. As such, the soldiers could, and indeed, many did, regard it as a sort of holiday.

The fact that part of this ‘holiday’ was spent in and near the ‘Holy Land’ added to the sense of satisfaction they derived from this experience. Although New Zealand, like many other countries, was increasingly becoming a secular society, the Bible remained a common touchstone in New Zealand culture.120 Thus, many of the New Zealanders found the sights to be more accessible and to have more meaning than similar sights in Egypt. Not all, of course, had totally positive reactions to the tombs and temples of Palestine. As Joyce Macdonald recalled:

...everyone has at some time or other conjured up in his [sic] mind his own private impression of what the Holy Land should be and look like; therefore when one is faced with the reality, more than a little adjustment is required.121

Nonetheless, the ‘adjustment’ required when faced with the ‘real’ Holy Land was far easier for the tourists to make here, than in Egypt. This was because, while some found that the commercialisation of such sights detracted somewhat from their overall impact, the very ‘familiarity’ of such sights (and sites) in New Zealand culture ensured that the New Zealanders derived some sense of satisfaction from the tourist’s claim of having ‘been there’. Furthermore, while the sightseeing experience in Egypt had been, for these tourists, ruined by

118 White, diary, 11-12 July 1940, MS Papers 1514, folder 1, pp.84-85, ATL; Hugh Butler to family, 1 September 1941, p.1, MS Papers 1423, ATL.
119 Hicks, MS Papers 1442, folder 1, ATL.
120 Olssen, p.268; White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.54.
121 Macdonald, p.32.
the cloying presence of an obtrusive local population, here, the people appear to have conformed more fully to Barthes’ description, remaining, for the most part, as necessary extras in the background.122

So many expectations, both their own and society’s, had been fulfilled for the New Zealanders in Syria and Palestine. They had found the ‘Orient’ as they had imagined it to be - exotic, mysterious, and spiritual; and so, for the ‘khaki clad tourists’ of 2(NZ) Division, the ‘Holy Land[s]’ truly became the ‘Promised Land[s]’.

122 Barthes, p.75. [Cited earlier.]
Conclusion

'ABROAD, THE TOURIST IS THE RELENTLESS REPRESENTATIVE OF HOME'\textsuperscript{1}

If ever I am able to, I am going to bring you all to these parts of the world sometime. I could conduct you all on the most marvellous tours of Australia, Hawaii, America, Canada, Mexico, England, South Africa, Egypt, Greece, Crete, Palestine... [and] Syria.'\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1} Buzard, p.8.
\textsuperscript{2} Smith to family, 1 June 1942, p.10, MS Papers 1701, folder 1, ATL.
Until the 1950s, war service was New Zealand’s most significant form of mass tourism, and its most democratic. New Zealanders had always been enthusiastic travellers, volunteering for service in the far-flung places of the world—a enthusiasm and a tradition which their successors in 2(NZ) Division inherited. ‘The traveller’s world...’, according to Paul Fussell, ‘...is not the ordinary one, for travel itself, even the most commonplace, is an implicit search for anomaly.’ For many New Zealand soldiers in this period, travel did indeed offer the chance to see the ‘strange and novel sights’ of the world, to gain an education. In fact, Richard White’s observation on the meaning of travel for the members of 1AIF is pertinent to the New Zealand experience of World War Two:

...for even the dullest of men, it implied an intellectual rather than just a physical adventure. Travel from a culture that could see itself as provincial was essentially a learning experience, and it is impressive just how seriously they took their education.

Like those of their Anzac predecessors, 2(NZ) Division’s motives for volunteering or for accepting conscription were as varied as the individuals concerned. Most joined for a cluster of reasons—to escape uninteresting occupations, dull towns or domestic responsibilities; notions of duty, patriotic fervour or moral principles; good money and steady work; peer and family pressure; as well as a sense of adventure—and while travel may not have been the primary motive for all, the chance to see and experience ‘strange and novel sights’ did feature in the decisions of many; and for a significant proportion, it was their primary drive. As one researcher has claimed of Maori enlistment:

The vast majority of Maori men themselves went for the hell of it. This is a fact. I have been told it over and over again by the men themselves. Here was a chance for adventure, a free trip overseas, and a chance to do some of the things their fathers had done in World War I. Also not to be overlooked was the economic aspect of it. Maoris [sic] had suffered particularly hard during the depression. The Army offered pay, keep—excluding clothing—on top of it all, which appealed more favourably with anything they could get in private employment. Most thought that they had nothing to lose. At first the prospect of death or injury did not enter into their thoughts.

These reasons were by no means limited to Maori. While war, therefore, enabled large numbers of New Zealanders to form an impression of the world, it was also a vehicle by which they could impress the world. ‘As a small and isolated country whose European settlers felt a sense of exile from older centres of power...’, Jock Phillips has observed, ‘...New Zealand could gain a place on the world stage through participation in ...war.’ This desire to both see

3 Fussell, Abroad, p.167.
6 Roger Taylor cited in McLod, p.25.
7 Phillips, ‘War and National Identity’, p.93. Although as Phillips himself points out elsewhere, it is
and be seen by the world found its expression most readily through the lens of tourism. They were viewed, and indeed, viewed themselves, as tourists. Soldiers are, of course, 'no ordinary tourists', but, as Richard White has suggested of 1AIF:

...the vast majority were tourists at some point. They left with the same rituals as tourists, sailed in the same liners, celebrated as they crossed the equator, made the same ports of call. They followed tour guides, took photos, bought postcards, acquired souvenirs...chose presents for the family, picked up foreign words, ...kept up their diaries and wrote their letters home. 8

Furthermore, this illusion of tourism received encouragement from the army itself. Route marches were conducted past points of interest while, especially in Egypt and Palestine, 'Official NZEF Trips and Tours' were organised to the principal tourist sights. 9 Lectures and informative talks were given on a range of topics of historical interest, travel articles were published in the division's official newspaper - the NZEF Times - and a series of guidebooks on Egypt and the principal cities and countries visited by the division, were published. These were all for the 'serious' tourists within the division's ranks. 'Serious' tourists were what the New Zealanders intended to be - for all tourists dislike tourists. It has always been fashionable to deride the 'tourist'; he or she is not criticised for leaving home to see the sights but rather, '...for being satisfied with superficial experiences of other peoples and places.' 10 The 'tourists' of 2(NZ) Division were aware of this criticism and sought to avoid the shame of being a tourist by demonstrating their serious attitude to travel - and the educative and acculturating opportunities offered therein. '[T]ouristic shame is not based on being a tourist...' writes Dean MacCannell, '...but on not being tourist enough, on a failure to see everything the way it “ought” to be seen.'

The touristic critique of tourism is based upon a desire to go beyond the other "mere" tourists to a more profound appreciation of society and culture, and it is by no means limited to intellectual statements. All tourists desire this deeper involvement with society and culture to some degree.... 11

These desires were reflected in material prepared for the New Zealanders. The foreword to the Education and Rehabilitation Service's guide to Cairo, for example, read:

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9 See for example an advertisement for 'Goldhaber Tours: Authorised NZEF Tours. Luxor and Aswan; Palestine; Syria; Lebanon', NZEF Times, 2, 79, Monday 28 December 1942, p.8.
10 MacCannell, p.10.
11 ibid.
...the first section has been confined in the main to the origin of the various historical monuments or their remains still to be seen in and about the present Cairo, with sufficient background details to enable these works perhaps to be better appreciated. The second section deals with life in the Cairo of today while in the final section it is hoped some of the information included here and not set out in guidebooks, in respect of the monuments and trips and tours, will prove of interest.  

Hence, the ERS sought not only to provide the division's tourists with enough information to ensure the sights would be seen, but also that these sights would be 'better appreciated' and seen the way they 'ought' to be.

There was, however, an element of self-interest in the army's activities. 'I have felt for a long time that there is a need in the 2NZEF for an organisation designed to promote culture and education in the army...' wrote one senior member of 2NZEF's Public Relations Service. 'The 2NZEF has been in existence for over two years and for the majority of its membership there has been a gap in their cultural and mental development. ...This produces a psychological state which is reflected in army life by slackness in formal discipline, self discipline, crime and general boredom.' Hence, while tourism could provide the New Zealand soldier with a means to fill the '...gap which the war [was] causing in the education, general, technical and cultural, of the men serving in the 2NZEF...', it could also provide an antidote for boredom and prevent indiscipline.

There is a further element in this 'tourist' identity which, although speculative, is worth exploration. The members of 2(NZ) Division were not abroad on holiday nor was their primary task that of sightseeing. Given the very real horrors of war itself, is it possible, as Richard White asks, '...that one of the ways of coping with this horror ...was this tourist stance.... The tourist is uninvolved, and this precious detachment, the capacity to stand aside for a time, might have been a crucial respite in war.' Certainly the New Zealanders appear to have employed a number of devices, both on and off the battlefield, to distance themselves from the carnage around them. They sought to turn battle-sites into sights, often touring the battlefield after the event (and indeed, sometimes in the quiet periods during the battle) to look

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12 Gerrard, *Cairo*, foreword, WA II, Series 1, DA 552.23/2, NA. [My emphasis].

13 NZ PRS to officer i/c Admin. HQ 2NZEF, undated, 'Public Relations Service office records', WA II, Series 1, DA 8/9/2/10, NA. While the 2NZEF Public Relations Service was established early in the war, the ERS was not formed until the middle of 1944, '...at least three years too late...' in Major General Stevens' opinion. See Stevens, p.254.

14 NZ PRS to HQ 2NZEF, 9 January 1942, WA II, Series 1, DA 8/9/2/10, NA.

15 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.71. That the New Zealand soldiers were 'no ordinary tourists' should be remembered throughout this study. One should be careful not to trivialise their experiences for, as Alison Parr's study shows, the horrors of war could have a very real and lasting impact on the survivors, just as their travel experiences could. See Alison Parr, *Silent Casualties: New Zealand's unspoken legacy of the Second World War*, North Shore City (NZ): Tandem Press, 1995.
for that adjunct of tourism, the souvenir. ‘As the day wore on things quietened down’, recalled Noel Gardiner in *Freyberg’s Circus*, ‘...so it became a day of stalemate, a day, for us at least, to take stock. We had a chance to have a proper mosey around to see if there was any loot lying about. Sometimes a Luger or even a Leica camera could be picked up.’¹⁶ Souvenir hunting enabled some to commercialise the war, to turn their experience into profit.

I’m more or less happy where I am now and anyhow the job’s got to be done. It’s quite profitable in a small way with a bit of loot tossed in. I’ve got quite a collection of souvenirs including revolvers, swords and knives and razor blades by the dozen.¹⁷

Others probably took photographs as a way of distancing themselves from war; for in the very act of taking a photograph, the camera was a barrier - always between the photographer and that which was being photographed.¹⁸ Converting experiences into images was also evident in the way the New Zealanders wrote about war itself and in the descriptions they used.

Spectacular barrage begins about 4am, making it seem as though we are ringed with fire. Flashes make camp seem like day and noise is astounding. ...Flashes are red, orange and orange-green.¹⁹

So the New Zealand soldiers acquired souvenirs, took photos, went sightseeing and otherwise engaged in ‘ordinary’ tourist behaviours; but there are other devices which they used to express their tourist outlook. They were conscious of the fact that they could be sightseeing on behalf of friends and family at home, and because of this, many attempted to provide detailed descriptions of the sights and places visited. Indeed, Noel Chapman’s preface to one of his diary entries expressed a common sentiment.

I hope these letters are interesting. It is a pity I didn’t have more time and better conditions. I could describe places and things much better but never mind, I can only do my best.²⁰

But this realisation that they were writing for a domestic audience meant that in these same letters and memoirs, the front-line soldiers themselves would often conceal the true nature of combat as they experienced it, partly from the desire to avoid unpleasant memories but more

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¹⁶ Gardiner, p.97.
¹⁸ The way in which photography can distance the photographer from the image is a point explored by Susan Sontag. ‘A way of certifying experience...’ she writes, ‘...taking photographs is also a way of refusing it ...by converting experience into an image, a souvenir.’ Sontag, pp.9-10.
¹⁹ Fleming, diary, Wednesday 26 August 1942, WA II, Series 1, DA 441.23/2, NA.
²⁰ Chapman, 14 November 1943, diary, Accession 1986.1846, AM.
probably to avoid alarming friends and loved ones at home. One soldier, for example, sent home his diary with a covering letter to his wife. 'Dear Beryl...', it began:

This is my diary of the Libyan campaign. Just a brief summary of some of the events. I wrote it and have not re-read it since writing. ...[It is just as I saw things, I'd rather you not read it, as some things may upset you.]

Thus, many of the soldiers' letters contain narratives and comments of interest to readers at home, on such tourist's topics as the countryside, sporting fixtures, places visited and sights seen, as well as on more general topics of immediate concern such as when the war would end. But more sensitive material was omitted either by self-censorship or by the requirements of the military censors. It is therefore possible that readers at home could be forgiven for mistaking the activities and movements of 2(NZ) Division for those of a civilian touring party. Thomas Birks, a gunner with 14 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, for example, recalled that one member of his unit '...was offered £350 by the *Free Lance* for the publication of his diary, which actually had nothing about war conditions in it [and was] ...presumably about the trip over and things and conditions in Egypt.' As Birks' comments suggest, this illusion of tourism could also be maintained by newspapers at home. *The Clutha Leader*, for example, published an article on the activities of New Zealand soldiers in the Middle East under the title 'Travel In The Middle East: Soldiers Go Far Afield On Holidays.' In the article, it detailed the activities of sergeant Arthur Helm who '[had]... been able to visit 14 countries since leaving New Zealand...'; while Major Ian Mason '[had]...travelled not less than 70,000 miles since early 1940 and has visited 15 countries....' Often, too, in broadcasts intended for domestic consumption, there could be 'nothing about war conditions'.

In conclusion, may I say that you need have no fears for the welfare of your lads over here. We are fit and well and enjoying a healthy open-air existence, with plenty of sport, plenty of exercise and marvellously fine weather and sunshine. But, of course, we are all looking forward to seeing New Zealand, our wives and sweethearts, our families, our friends in the not too distant future.

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21 'Copy of Diary written in the Field during the Libyan Campaign by Gunner (Tom) T.K. Pollock', p.1, Accession 9201096, AM.
22 Censorship was perhaps the ultimate frustration for the soldier-tourists as they were unable to say where they were or what they had seen - which is surely the whole point of being a tourist.
23 Birks to his mother, letter # 61, 24 May 1942, p.9, MS 1413, folder 3, box 1, AIM.
24 *The Clutha Leader*, 19 July 1943, WA II, Series 2, item 64, 'Soldiers' letters' [Collection of newspaper clippings of letters from WW II servicemen abroad published in New Zealand newspapers], bundle 4, NA. Indeed, many of these well-travelled soldier-tourists could, no doubt, sympathise with John Westbrook's complaint: 'I saw so much in such a rush last week that I think I've forgotten half of what I did see.' Westbrook to his mother, 5 November 1940, p.1, MS Papers 1407, folder 3, ATL.
25 Extract from Sgt. Quayle, Unit Historian, 26 NZ Inf. Bnt., 'Activities of 26 NZ Inf. Bnt. in drive to Trieste', undated, 'Miscellaneous broadcast scripts concerning activities of 2NZ Division in Italian
Rarely were the public aware of the true nature of war for the front-line soldier. Compare, for example, Sergeant Quayle’s account of the activities of the 26 Battalion, admittedly broadcast in early 1945 when the Division was driving towards Trieste, with the following extract from the private diary of a member of 27(MG) Battalion describing his return to Cassino, some three months or so after the battles.

The silence hanging over the place now is almost eerie by contrast with its former crashing echoes and staccato reports.... The first grisly exhibit was a partially intact building, heaped inside to a depth of eight feet with unidentifiable portions of human bodies. Single heads, arms, pieces of trunk and even just unrecognisable pieces of torn flesh - both Jerry and Allied - had been placed in this communal pyre and burnt. All over the town bodies lay where they had been struck down and skulls and bones encased in shrunken parchment like skin added to the horrible litter. Numbers of New Zealanders were working among the ruins, recovering mates whose uniforms alone kept them in one piece.... The pitiful rotting bundles were sown up in blankets and buried in a daily growing cemetery near the old chapel, where every second cross bore the terse legend - "unknown soldier". I saw them lift a corpse out of a stagnant pool. Its arms and head fell back into the water and the trunk broke in two. It was a sickening sight; to see all those inert huddled heaps which were once living, talking men....

Yet even within this disturbing description there are elements of this tourist detachment. It was a 'sickening sight', containing, as it did, 'grisly exhibits' - but it was a sight (and a site) nonetheless; and he had returned to the battlefield, in much the same way as countless civilians would in the future, specifically to view such sights. This was a pilgrimage but also a sightseeing opportunity, and while the sights are somewhat grisly, here, he is not a participant but an observer - a tourist in other words.

This tourist stance is more readily seen in the letters and diaries of the members of 2(NZ) Division. While those accounts that do survive are perhaps not representative of the division as a whole, they do reflect the democratic nature of this particular form of 'tourism' in that they come from a wider social range than would normally be found doing the sights in this period. War and the very real possibility of not returning from overseas encouraged a form of literary

26 Moss, diary, Thursday 22 June 1944, 'Diary 1944', MS Papers 2281/4, folder 3, ATL.
27 Such grisly exhibits were not necessarily confined to battlefields. In 1944, the organisers of a waxwork exhibition offered the public the chance to 'COME INSIDE AND SEE REAL NAZI TORTURES, FLOGGING, CRUCIFIXION, GAS CHAMBERS, ETC. CHILDREN'S AMUSEMENT SECTION NO EXTRA CHARGE', cited in Jeremy Treglown, 'In the Presence of a Violent Reality: The Blitz Between Life and Art', *Times Literary Supplement*, March 31, 1995, p.16. [Emphasis in the original].
28 This is a problem which has been encountered by others. See White, 'Bluebells and Fogtown', p.46. The WA II series 1 files at National Archives are probably the most 'democratic' collection - these being accounts drawn from participants in the various campaigns for the purposes of writing the official unit and campaign histories.
reflection, even amongst the non-literary, and their tourist outlook gave their accounts a particular shape. 'The momentum that drives a series of letters or a travel diary is the steady accumulation of stages in a journey', writes Richard White, and the New Zealanders also recorded the significant stages in their journey: boarding the troopship; leaving the harbour; last glimpse of New Zealand; first sight of Australia; first leave in a 'foreign' land; ports of call; first glimpse of their official destination; first impressions, and so forth.29 But they also recorded other episodes - their first battle; their first corpse; their first wound - in much the same way.30 It should also be remembered here that, while combat is the defining feature of the soldier's life, in World War Two, the proportion of men who actually experienced combat within an army was far less than in the previous war. Little wonder then that '[t]he popular memory of World War Two' owes more to fond allusions to foreign climes, sunshine, good health and periodic binges than to any real conception of conditions at the front.'31

This sense of tourism giving shape to their experience of war was also evident in the titles chosen for many of their memoirs, and in their habit (one which they shared with IAI and perhaps 1NZEF) of seeing a move as representing, '...not so much another front, as another country.'32

Well, I have added yet another new country to my list, and after a very pleasant boat trip across the Mediterranean [sic] we arrived here in Italy. It has been a very welcome change after ...Egypt.33

29 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.73. See for example Lt. R. L. Kay, 'The Voyage from NZ to Egypt 27 Aug.-28 Oct. [1940]', WA II, Series 1, DA 441/2, NA; R.W. Collier, 'Private diary of voyage to Egypt via India from NZ and activities with 26 NZ Battalion from 28 Aug. 1940 to 10 Nov. 1941', WA II, Series 1, DA 441/6, NA.

30 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.74. See for example R.M. Bell, 'Events of Interest and Personal Experiences since the outbreak of war - September 1939', WA II, Series 1, DA 441/7, NA; E.S. Hicks, 'The History of a Soldier's Life in the Army from 1941 until the end', MS Papers 1442, folder 1, ATL; John G.W. Pearson, 'One Man's War: Wartime Diary of John G.W. Pearson 6 January 1940-43', Accession 8900370, AM.


32 White, 'The Soldier as Tourist', p.74.

33 R.N. Jones to Olive Cotter, 9 November 1943, p.1, MS Papers 1756, folder 1, ATL. 1NZEF were also glad to leave Egypt, and found France to be a '...great but delightful change....' Indeed, as one correspondent wrote: 'The East has its charms, but the hard realities of life under war conditions would tend to monotony, especially where everything was alien and so far removed in colour from the associations that hold in countries where white civilisation has been.... The weariness due to the strange surroundings and the life and customs of peoples ...so different from their own race made the New Zealanders and Australians eager to reach [the Western Front]', Otago Daily Times, Thursday 11 May 1916, pp.5, 6. It would appear that 2NZEF shared similar sentiments and were equally eager to see Italy. See Underhill, et al., pp.100-101.
Indeed, some took any opportunity to add ‘new countries’ to their itinerary. John Hood, on leave in Palestine, went sight-seeing near the Jordan River: ‘We walked over the bridge so I suppose I can say I have set foot in TransJordan’, he wrote. The New Zealanders, therefore, had more than just a touch of the tourist about them and in their reactions to the ‘strange and novel’ sights provided by war, they observed the protocols and rituals of tourism. It was a pattern that they used throughout the war and one which the Anzacs had practiced before them; utilising ‘...the objectifying conventions of tourism ...as a protective shield against the full implications of war.’

Although travel for those who saw themselves as provincials was essentially a learning experience, it also mattered to these tourists where this experience took place. England was the New Zealanders’ preferred destination. It was the focus of their literary, cultural and economic world and the importance with which the Second Echelon viewed their unique opportunity to see England can be gauged by their behaviour upon arrival. Unlike their (and indeed the other echelons’ and reinforcements’) arrival at virtually every other port of call, where groups regularly jumped ship in order to take advantage of the locals’ hospitality - whether invited or not - in England their behaviour was far more restrained. Clearly there was something different about England in their eyes for they were just as eager, if not more so, to see England as they had been to see Fremantle, Perth or Capetown.

Arriving at Greenock (Gourock) in the Firth of Clyde, Roderick Fell and the other members of his battalion entrained for Aldershot. ‘I suppose I slept for about 2 hours off and on...’ he wrote, ‘...but I was so interested in the trip that even in the dark I did not notice that I had not slept.’ Most of the Second Echelon were just as interested in England and they eagerly seized every and any opportunity to see the sights. ‘Sunday night, Paul, Joe ... and myself got an ASC driver to pinch his truck and take us into Maidstone...’, wrote one eager soldier-tourist. As well as touring the conventional sights, they, like 1AIF and certainly 1NZEF, were ‘...enthusiastic visitors of relatives, their own and anyone else’s...’ which could take them well away from the usual tourist haunts. In virtually all of their descriptions of England, however, they conformed to the conventional images which were so familiar to generations of New Zealanders. They were, exactly as the Anzacs before them, ‘...seeing the

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34 Hood, p.14, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
35 White, ‘Sun, Sand and Syphilis’, p.53.
37 1AIF arriving in France had displayed a similar inhibition, although there, many of the troops and officers were seasoned veterans of the Gallipoli campaign and therefore, one would suspect, more disciplined. See White, ‘Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist’, pp.134-136.
38 Fell to his mother, 20 June 1940, p.7, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
39 Aylett to family, 6 November 1940, MS Papers 1603, ATL.
40 White, ‘Bluebells and Fogtown’, p.56.
metropolis, with all the intimate familiarity they could bring to a place that has only ever been known second hand."41

Their 'familiarity' with England affected their response to it. They found, for example, that they could not adequately describe the English landscape - which was not surprising, for they were attempting to describe that which they had already accepted as the ideal. Many found, as Roderick Fell did, that England was 'too wonderful for words.'42 They expressed their delight when they encountered people and places exactly as they had imagined them to be; indeed, some claimed that they did not require a map of London, so familiar were the landmarks.43

But within their conventional responses to England there were elements of a New Zealand parochialism. Maori Battalion's official history recorded the response of the first group to have leave in London.

If they were overwhelmed by the size of the buildings and crowds in the streets they refused to acknowledge it, for when the men in the first party returned to camp and were asked what London was like they answered off-handedly, "Just like Wellington, only bigger".44

There is, of course, an element of bravado in this particular response, but the sentiment was not an isolated one. Henare Ngata '[w]ent on leave to a town 6 miles from here, which seems smaller than Gisborne but actually has a larger population than Wanganui. ...The facilities that we have in towns half the size of this one have places here licked....'45 Perhaps the explanation for these particular responses lay somewhere within the interaction of race and class. Ngata had found that he '...passed through a lot of ...places that I'd read about but never thought I'd see...', and mourned that it '...made me wish I had paid more attention to my history and geography...',46 which may lend credence to Keith Sinclair's observation: 'It would be difficult to prove but it does seem that a sentimental attitude towards 'Home' was most likely to be found among the better educated and most widely read....'47 This may have been homesickness at work, as they had only just arrived, but it was not a response solely limited to troops (Maori or pakeha) in England at this time, nor was it one confined only to new arrivals. 'Veteran' tourists also expressed such sentiments.

For the vast majority of the Division, however, it would be that tourist destination, Egypt, which would be their first sustained encounter with the new lands, new faces and new languages that this war offered. By the late 1860s, Thomas Cook was offering excursions to

41 White, 'Europe and the Six-Bob-a-Day Tourist', p.126.
42 Fell to his mother, 20 June 1940, p.5, MS Papers 1575, folder 1, ATL.
43 Bassett, 'Onward', pp.71-72, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/9, NA.
44 Cody, 28 (Maori) Battalion, pp.20-21.
45 Ngata to family, 3 October 1940, p.15, WA II, Series 1, DA 442/4, NA.
46 ibid., 9 July 1940, p.9. [Cited earlier].
47 Sinclair, p.108.
visit, not the exhibits of the 'Orient,' which had proved so popular, but the real thing; and that 1AIF's first real landfall was Egypt, in Richard White's opinion, '...certainly reinforced [their] ...tourist perspective because by 1914 Egypt was an archetypal tourist destination....'48 That Egypt was 2NZEF's first real landfall had an identical effect. For Europeans, Egypt became a destination in its own right, offering the wealthy a chance to enter the gateway to the Orient and inspect what lay within; but for Australian tourists and, one could add, for New Zealand tourists, too, '...Egypt was not a destination, but a port of call on their primary pilgrimage to London....' Egypt had its share of tourist sights but it was not a priority in their eyes.49

In a number of significant ways, the New Zealanders' experiences of Egypt would closely resemble those of the European tourists before them. According to Karl Marx, man 'raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality' and the soldier-tourists of 2(NZ) Division arrived in Egypt looking for the same kind of structure 'raised in imagination.'50 They arrived in Egypt, to paraphrase Mitchell, after seeing plans and copies - in pictures, exhibitions and books - of which they were seeking the original. These images were supplemented by those gleaned from their predecessors in 1NZEF or from the 'Arabian phase' of popular culture, then in vogue. As a consequence, they found it virtually impossible to represent the 'Orient' as they found it.51 Reality experienced did not match reality imagined.

They had arrived in Egypt as tourists and the majority had been thus far, untouched by war itself. Egypt offered entry into the 'mysterious East' with - to this generation of New Zealanders - all of its intensely familiar images. 'If you are interested in history...', advised the 6th Reinforcements' magazine, The Auld Acquaintance, '...you will find it all round you. Every step you take will be retracing the path of some immortal: Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Cleopatra, Julius Caeser, Alexander of Macedon, Genghis Khan, ...Saladin, Napoleon, Gordon, Allenby, Lawrence.'52 It was Egypt's ancient history which captured their attention. The New Zealanders could be found, sometimes within hours of their arrival, touring the conventional tourist sights, climbing the pyramids, visiting the museums and the zoo, sailing down the Nile on feluccas and so on, in much the same way as tourists - both military and civilian - had done before them.53 Indeed, so common were these activities among the troops that it led the NZEF Times to comment rather sarcastically in an

48 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.51; Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, p.21.
49 White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', pp.51-52.
51 Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, pp.28-30; Downes, p.62. [Cited earlier].
52 'That Romantic East', The Auld Acquaintance, July 1941, p.28.
53 'New Zealand troops go sight-seeing' Otago Daily Times, Friday 14 June 1940, p.9; White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.53. See also Plate 2: 'Giza: climbing the Great Pyramid', in Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, p.25.
article entitled ‘Salute to our Unsung Heroes’: ‘No-one has been congratulated ...upon refusing to climb the Pyramids - but they should be.’

Egypt was also, however, for the vast majority of 2(NZ) Division’s tourists, their first introduction to a truly cosmopolitan society. ‘It’s hard to know where and how to tell you about this place...’ wrote G.S. Snadden, ‘...it’s so vast, its peoples are so varied in race and in class.... It is a city of contrasts, of the ancient and of the modern, of crowds and of smells.’ Initially, the New Zealanders were fascinated by the local life in Cairo. ‘Leave in Cairo with its cafés and bars, cinemas and museums, was an experience to suit all tastes...’, wrote the authors of 20 Battalion’s official history, and the editors of Bab el Look agreed. ‘The movies themselves are novel...', they wrote, ‘...in that besides the audible English dialogue, the French version is overprinted on the film, whilst an interpretation in Arabic shows upon its own tiny screen sidestage.’ For many of the soldier-tourists of 2(NZ) Division, Cairo was, as their ERS guidebook described it:

...[a] city of contradictions, of motor cars and donkey-carts, of towering ferro-concrete flats and mud hovels, of roaring factories and quiet and hallowed mosques, or wireless masts and minarets, [encompassing] within its limits the products of centuries, welded into a whole that is sometimes surprising, sometimes fantastic but always unique. Yes, still it may be said that he who has not seen Cairo has not seen the world.

Others were, however, more circumspect. Pat Kane, for example, found it to be ‘...a city of extremes, extreme wealth, extreme poverty, the cradle of culture and an abyss of ignorance.’ Because Cairo (and to some extent, Alexandria) was the centre where the New Zealanders spent the majority of their leave whilst in Egypt, many felt, as Pat Kane did, that ‘...Cairo was Egypt and Egypt, Cairo.’ This period in the metropolis affected their view of Egypt as a whole, and its people in particular.

‘I can’t seem to cotton on to those Gyppos somehow...’, complained John Westbrook. ‘The more I see them, the more I detest them.’ Westbrook’s complaint was a common one among the New Zealanders. Like their predecessors, they were primarily interested in the sights and not the people of Egypt. They would have preferred not to have ‘seen’ the Egyptians at all, unless they could somehow fit in as necessary elements in ‘biblical’ or ‘oriental’ scenes. ‘To the extent that the people fitted in as marginal embellishments...’ writes Richard White of 1AIF, ‘...to scenes of oriental ambience, spotted at a safe distance, the

54 ‘Salute to our Unsung Heroes’, NZEF Times, 1, 21, Monday 17 November 1941, p.6.
55 G.S. Snadden to family, 11 January 1943, p.1, Accession 9200081, AM.
56 Pringle and Glue, p.20; Bab el Look, 15 January 1941, p.17.
57 Gerrard, Cairo, p.9, WA II, Series 1, DA 552.23/2, NA.
58 Kane, p.55.
59 ibid., p.57.
60 Westbrook to family, 4 May 1940, p.5, MS Papers 1407, folder 2, ATL.
Egyptians themselves became sights. ...But these images were too ephemeral, too picturesque to bear the weight of a relationship.\textsuperscript{61} Any tourist activity with a 'host' culture is, by necessity, an exchange, and it was the need to deal with their Egyptian 'hosts' which ruined the orient for the New Zealanders. ‘The wogs are very primitive...' wrote Lt. Colonel Mitchell, of 7 Anti-Tank Regiment, ‘...and as is the normal custom in Egypt, the first words the kids learn to utter is “saïda” [hello] and the second is “backsheesh”.’\textsuperscript{62} The ambient had become the abhorrent.

The flies are pretty bad now. The Gyppos don't seem to mind them and let them crawl around their faces, it's awful. There's [sic] children in Cairo with eyes bunged up and diseased through flies, and the flies are still on their faces, feasting. Makes me sick.\textsuperscript{63}

The \textit{NZEF Times}, too, wrote:

When we go on leave ...haven't we got gentlemen of the highest lineage to show us the stupendous, shattering sights of Egypt and aren't these gentlemen specially appointed by the Government to do it - well, anyway, THEY'LL say they are. And haven't we got the inestimable privilege of living (rentfree) in the Exotic East, of gulping large lungfuls of Egyptian air (previously retailed only to luxury tourists).... Didn't THEY like Egypt so why shouldn't we? ...Isn't this an ancient, historic land full of sarcophagi, Sphinxes, Pyramids and Historic Spots and can't we see (and smell) them all at special rates for His Majesty's forces. Why shouldn't we be happy in the service?\textsuperscript{64}

Gradually then, tourist enthusiasm had given way to tourist ennui. This disjunction between the imagined and the real had led one American serviceman stationed in North Africa to observe:

This was, if not the beginning of wisdom, the beginning of my awareness that "abroad" was a far more complicated place, less conducive to quick judgements and easy solutions, than most Americans thought it was.\textsuperscript{65}

For the New Zealanders it was the beginning of a peculiar sort of 'wisdom'. War had provided the unexpected opportunity to travel, a chance to see the world, but paradoxically, while ostensibly broadening their horizons it also narrowed their outlook. As Blackwood Paul wrote of the 'travel' experience:

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\textsuperscript{61} White, 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis', p.56.
\textsuperscript{62} J.M. Mitchell, 'Extracts from letters concerning a trip from Egypt to Italy and Impressions of Taranto, Sept. - Oct. 1943', p.1, WA II, Series 1, DA 442.2/6, NA.
\textsuperscript{63} Westbrook to family, 22 March 1940, p.3, MS Papers 1407, folder 2, ATL.
\textsuperscript{64} 'Johnny Enzed says: "Happy in the Service" ', \textit{NZEF Times}, 1, 24, Monday 8 December 1941, p.6.
[Emphasis in original]. As an aside, this article also demonstrates an awareness of this 'democratic' form of tourism, and other New Zealanders also alluded to this in their memoirs and private accounts. See, for example, Macdonald, p.9; Kane, p.143.
\textsuperscript{65} Zinsser, pp.106-107.
I don’t really believe that travel broadens many minds and can only faintly hope that it has broadened mine. It merely reinforces into obstinate beliefs the preconceived ideas of the traveller.66

His comments, made in the mid 1930s, are also an appropriate summary of the ‘travel’ experience for the soldier-tourists of 2(NZ) Division. Tourism, according to Tim Rowse and Albert Moran, ‘...turns upon a logic of difference. The tourist is interested in what is unique and particular about the people and places she or he visits.’67 The New Zealanders had tried to show an interest in the strange and novel sights they encountered, but they had been repelled by the very images they sought. Travel had been, for many, an education in itself. ‘Just a few more weeks, and we will have been three years in Egypt’, wrote Fred Fleming. ‘Strange to think I know such cities as Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Cairo and Alexandria at least as well as I do Auckland! Better than Wellington!’68 John Kennedy also reflected that ‘...I have become rather less raw than at the beginning, have become used to army ways, have travelled some thousands of miles over strange countries and trackless deserts, have met strange people and observed their customs, have lived like a king in Cairo and lived like an animal in the desert.’69 Although travel could be educational, as Blackwood Paul’s comments suggest, the lesson learned was an intensely parochial one.

Meanwhile the year is slipping by and sometimes we wonder how long it will be before we see our homes again. The glamour of foreign lands tends to lessen as the months go by and New Zealand seems more and more a Paradise lost. We cling to our great national asset - a sense of humour - without which this existence would sometimes be rather boring. ...We number among our troubles the long weeks that separate the arrival of home mails, the rare privilege of leave, the primitive sanitary arrangements, the absence of English speaking people. ...We have had plenty of arguments, though all agree that no other country we have seen can rival New Zealand. Disputes do occur as to the respective merits of the North and South Islands, districts in those islands and even as between small towns. Blind patriotism is evident in these arguments so that one wonders how “God’s own country” can possibly possess such a liability as the South Island, Auckland or whatever....70

Blind patriotism and homesickness were, no doubt, factors in Kennedy’s comments, but for the tourists within the Division, there was something else at work. ‘[W]hat I have seen cannot compare (in my estimation) with our own country’, wrote R.G. Hambling, a driver with

66 Blackwood Paul, p.1, MS Papers 5523-08, ATL.
69 Kennedy to family, 18 October 1942, MS Papers 1449, folder 1, ATL.
70 ibid., 12 June 1942.
the Division. 'One thing I am certain of when I return I am spending my holidays seeing NZ properly because none of the places visited has anything like the beauty, climate and standard of living as our own island home.'

71 Nothing, for these men, could compare with New Zealand. 'The Blue Nile especially is much like any of our broad New Zealand rivers', wrote one tourist, while the Jordan river '...was very disappointing, ...a dirty muddy swift running river and half as wide as the Turakina', complained another.

72 The members of 2(NZ) Division were, therefore, 'no ordinary tourists' for their tourism had come full circle. The peculiar travel experience offered by war had given them the chance to observe many 'strange and novel sights' that the world had to offer, to make them aware not only of the differences but also of what they had in common with the foreign; but their encounter with the 'Other' had, ultimately, forced them to reflect upon the essence of their own 'New Zealand-ness'. As one of 2(NZ) Division's soldier-tourists (in a remarkably prescient observation) recorded:

I hope it will be gathered that I thoroughly enjoyed my fortnight in Palestine and I am very pleased indeed that I have been fortunately enough placed to be able to spend a leave there ...Naturally an experience I will never forget. At the same time I would greatly have preferred to be in the position where I could be holidaying with my own family in the Picton Sounds for instance. This leave has if anything only deepened my opinion that our own little country is about the best there is. This opinion is not bred from any feeling of homesickness either, but the more I see and the more I hear from men from elsewhere and the more I read makes me realise just what advantages we have. Our country as a whole, for instance climate, our general standards of education, our general standard of living and our health and other public services, while still leaving plenty of room for improvement, take a tremendous amount of equaling, let alone beating. The lack of real problems with regard to coloured races and large alien communities and our advanced legislation all help to build up our freedom and living conditions as a whole. Some may laugh at the legislation part of it, but I think that time will see many other countries putting through their own legislation which will be very near to what we have....

73 The tourist gaze had become refracted inwards. They were no longer interested in what the 'foreign', the 'other' had to offer for, in their travel and war-weary eyes, none of the places visited could compare with New Zealand. War had thus offered the chance not only of a 'wonderful' trip, but also of an 'education' of sorts; and the lesson learnt was an intensely parochial one. Indeed, as Michael Heyward has observed: 'The expatriate who comes back ...has one advantage over those who never left: he [sic] discovers what he already understood,

71 Hambling to family, 6 June 1941, p.4, MS 1018, AIM.
72 Raine to parents, 8 June 1942, p.3, Micro MS 0578, ATL; S/Sgt. K.J. Coombe, 'Holiday Trip to Khartoum', p.7, WA II, Series 1, DA 447.23/1, NA.
73 The First World War had, of course, also made troops aware of 'national' similarities and differences. See Noel McLaughlan, 'Nationalism and the Divisive Digger: Three Comments', Meanjin Quarterly, 27, 3 (September 1968), p.304.
74 Hood, MS Papers 2159, folder 1, ATL.
as if for the first time." Overseas, in new lands and new places, these, who were 'no ordinary tourists', had 'discovered' New Zealand.

75 Heyward, 'Alan Moorehead', p.26. [Emphasis in the original.]
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