

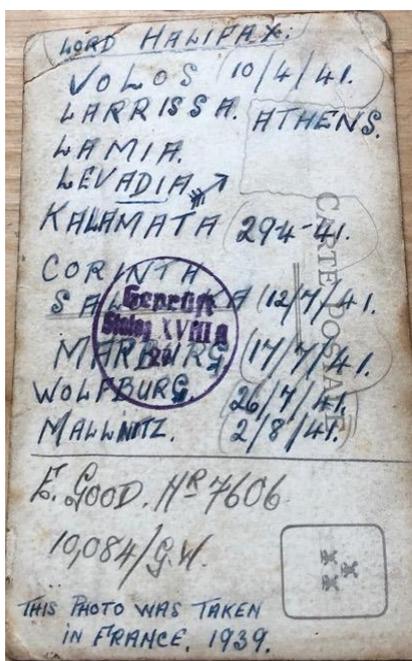
GREEK CAMPAIGN

Driver Edward Good, Royal Army Service Corps

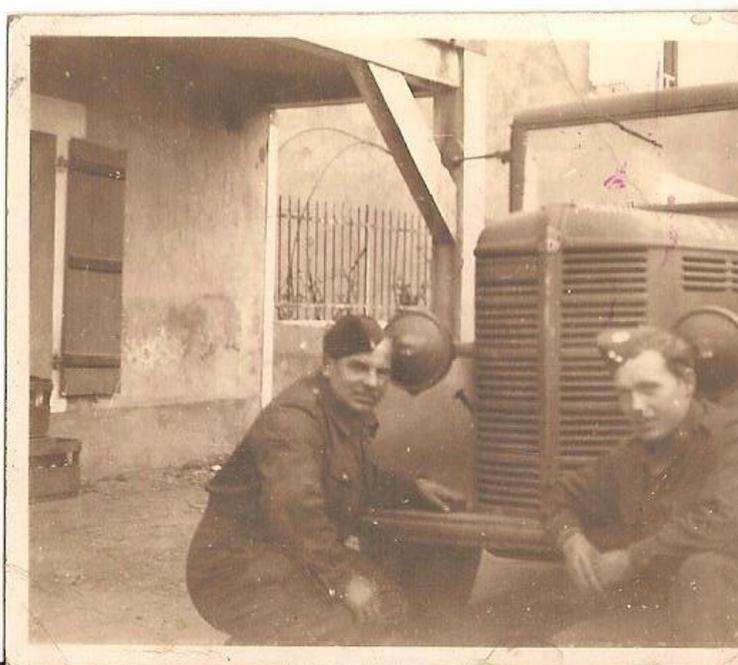
The only information we have with respect to Ted's personal participation in the Greek Campaign comes from the brief itinerary recorded on the reverse of a photograph taken in France in late 1939. However, it does shed some light on his navigations of the Greek mainland and the actions taking place.



SS Port Halifax, on which Ted arrived in Volos from Alexandria



Ted Good's Greek Odyssey



Ted and his pal Ray Keyse in Greece with their faithful Bedford steed

Archivist's Comments on Ted Good's Notes

- 1 Lord Halifax This is an inaccurate memory (written some time after Ted's arrival at Mallnitz Work Camp on 2 / 8 / 41) of the ship's name that took him to Volos. It was in fact "Port Halifax".
- 2 Volos 10 / 4 / 41 Piraeus Harbour (the extensive dock area of Athens) was the main port of entry for the vast majority of men and materiel entering Greece for the Campaign, mostly from March 7th onwards. Amongst other options on the Aegean Sea coast, the port city of Volos (200 miles or so further north) was also available to be used in a secondary role if necessary, although references to doing so are extremely rare.

A major change in the tactical importance of Volos as a port of entry occurred on the night of 6th / 7th April, the night after the first day of the German invasion of Greece. An air raid was aimed at the Piraeus docks complex where, by sheer bad fortune, a British transport ship SS Clan Fraser was tied up with 250 tons of high explosive in her holds. A lucky strike by a Luftwaffe bomb started fires on board Clan Fraser which ignited her cargo of TNT. The ensuing catastrophic explosion caused similar knock-on effects in various other vessels in the docks, utterly destroying most of the port unloading facilities and putting them totally out of action for several days. From the 7th April the reserve ports further up the coast were now thrust into top priority roles.

"WW2 Talk" website states in "From Egypt to Egypt via Greece and Crete":

". . . Convoy AG11 sailed 7 April, Alexandria to Piraeus to arrive 9 April with the remainder of the (Transport) Coy\Units held awaiting sailing. . . . 13RMT were divided between 3 ships; Port of Halifax, City of Windsor and Comliebank. The Comliebank returned to Alexandria on 8 April due to steering problems and the troops appear to have returned to the 13RMT Coy in Egypt later in the month. Due to an attack on Piraeus on 6 April the convoy could not disembark. **Port of Halifax** (*sic*) went to Vola (*sic*).



Clan Fraser and other vessels burning in Piraeus Harbour, night of 6th/ 7th April 1941



Devastation at the docks, 7th April - probably more than the air raid itself could have achieved

- 2 Larrissa (*sic*) Larissa was a forward HQ base area and assembly depot supporting the front line troops placed in the mountain passes to the north, defending the routes leading from the Yugoslav border from whence the German assault was expected. By 15th April the German advanced guard were attempting to penetrate into the gap created in the mountain range by the Pinios river, only 15 miles or so north of Larissa. The Allied rear-guard action at the Battle of Pinios Gorge was eventually over-whelmed on the 19th April and a withdrawal southwards was speedily transported to the next defensive stand.
- 3 Lamia The Thermopylae line was established on the southern bank of the wide flat flood plane just to the south of the town of Lamia. Despite fierce resistance it was all over by 25th April. Eddy's RASC Unit may possibly have left before the end carrying non-combatant personnel.

- 4 Levadia (*sic*) Livadia is on the road south from Lamia to Athens via Thebes. The arrow on the postcard possibly means they also went into Athens, or that it was an option.
- 5 Kalamata 29 / 4 / 41 The end of the line – hoping/expecting to be evacuated by the Royal Navy – but the ships were few and the regular nocturnal embarkation time was short. The onward southerly German mechanised and armoured onslaught was unstoppable, so to protect his remaining troops the Senior British Officer present, Brigadier Leonard Parrington, decided it was in their best interests to surrender. This was effected early on the morning of the 29th April 1941. The short-lived and ill-fated Greek Campaign was over.



Archivist's
Father

The morning of the surrender, Allied Prisoners of War lined up by the waterfront in Kalamata, 29th April, 1941. *Bundesarchiv* propaganda photograph for the German War Archives



Prison camp quickly established in Kalamata Barracks, 30 April 1941

- 6 Corinth The new PoWs were trucked, trained or marched from their various points of capture or surrender on the Greek Peloponnesus to their first holding camp or Frontstalag (designated Dulag 185) in dis-used Greek Army barracks in Corinth. Food, water, hygiene and sanitation were totally inadequate for the 8.000 or so newly-assembled captives. Many needless deaths occurred in those dreadful conditions during the first few weeks.
- 7 Salonika 12 / 7 / 41 As accommodation space became available, the men were cattle-trucked up country to Dulag 183 at Salonika (now Thessalonika). Here another few weeks of malnutrition, poor hygiene and foul sanitation were endured until replaced by the agonising 5-day locked-in cattle-truck journey to Austria. Ted left Salonika on 12 July.
- 8 Marburg 17 / 7 / 41 Having been sealed into the cattle truck with fifty-odd other men, some with dysentery, none with sufficient food or water, Ted arrived at Stalag XVIIIID at Marburg in German-occupied northern Yugoslavia (now Maribor, Slovenia). Here his PoW induction, administration, identification and sanitation would have been conducted. He was allocated PoW Registration Number 7606.

- 9 Wolfburg (*sic*) 26 / 7 / 41 Nine days later Ted was taken over the border into Austria to the main regional control camp, Stalag XVIII A at Wolfsberg,
- 10 Mallnitz 2 / 8 / 41 He was sent to the town of Mallnitz to join an ArbeitsKommando (Work Party) No. 10084/GW engaged on road-making, maintenance and repair.

Post-Script

Items of some distant relevance and interest discovered in a PhD Thesis by Maria Hill titled
**THE AUSTRALIANS IN GREECE AND CRETE:
 A STUDY OF AN INTIMATE WARTIME RELATIONSHIP**
 Australian Defence Force Academy
 University of New South Wales &
 Australian War Memorial

A rare reference to Allied activity in Volos – somewhat short-lived and disconcerting:

“Members of the 2/6th Australian General Hospital were very upset by the behaviour of the Greek citizens of Volos who had pillaged the hospital supplies that had been sent there. The 2/6th Hospital had only ‘functioned as a hospital for little over 24 hours’ in Volos before they were ordered to withdraw. Their report noted ‘that instead of protecting and guarding the equipment of their Allies, the local inhabitants appear to have committed gross acts of hostility and vandalism as well as robbery, which would almost amount to Fifth Column activities.’

They insisted that the supplies be returned. So a party of volunteers led by Captain A. J. Kennedy returned to Volos and, with the help of the local police, inspected the houses in the town to salvage what they could. The Australian response was understandable given the shortage of medical supplies and equipment during the war, but so was the behaviour of the Greeks who were faced with severe deprivations and were looking for resources wherever they could find them.”

AWM



AWM: 006833 Setting up camp at Volos (Negative D. Parer)
 [actually at Agria, near Volos]



AWM: 128427: Greece 1941- Larissa during an air raid
(Eddy Good passed through Larissa (at least) twice – N to the front and S in withdrawal)