Francis Bernard Keenan

Born Wagin, West Australia 18.9.1916
Enlisted 9.6.1939
Rank Stoker

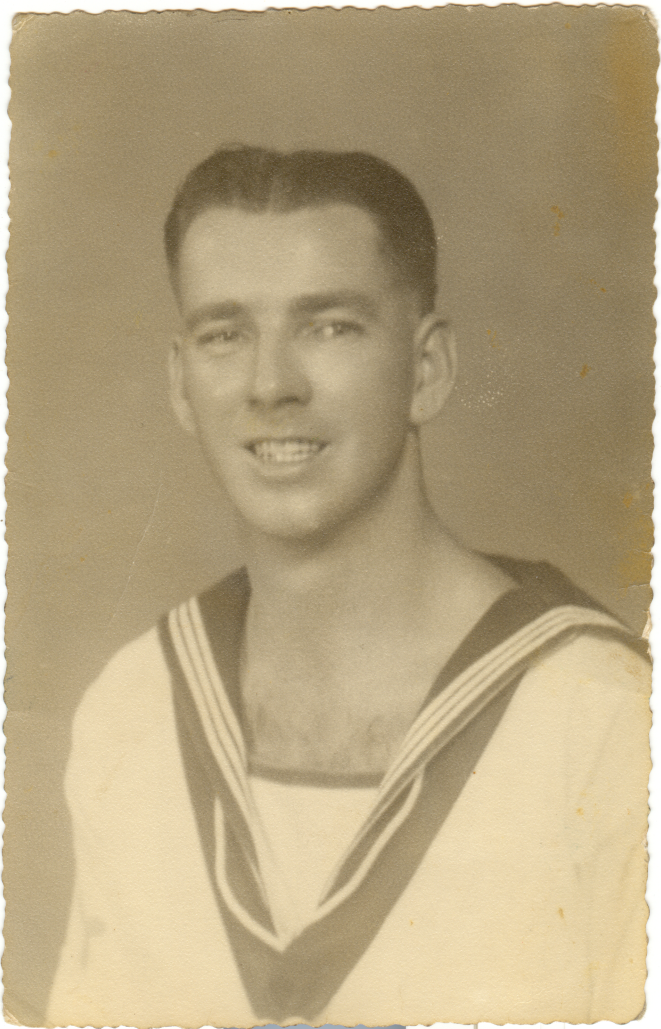
Frank was the youngest of 7 children (2 boys + 5 girls) born to Richard and Catherine (nee Tanner) Keenan. He was educated in West. Australia. High Schooled at St. Ildephonsus College, New Norcia WA.
Prior to enlisting Frank worked as a miner on the WA goldfields, including the Murchison and Kalgoorlie - Coolgardie fields.

Frank was a talented poet + diarist + wrote numerous poems about the Australian bush + his time at sea. A surviving diary written on board HMAS Sydney II between April 1940 and September 1941 (including his account of the encounter with the Bartolomeo Colleoni) makes interesting reading. I have included ~~an~~ a copy of one of his poems, "Dawn Stand-To", published in the Salt Magazine 20.11.1944.

Frank was survived by his parents and 6 siblings (now all deceased).

He is remembered with love + affection by his numerous nieces, nephews + their families.

RIP



Grandson of
Frank & Sarah Keenan
(nee Wheeler)

POST · CARD

ADDRESS ONLY

CORRESPONDENCE

To Dear Mr. and Mrs. Keenan
We are very sorry
to hear of your
loss

Frances Bernard Keenan
Son of Richard & Catherine Keenan.
Died in action W.W. II


SYDNEY

POST CARD

ADDRESS ONLY

CORRESPONDENCE

FRANCIS BERNARD
FRANK
KEEVAN

YOUNGEST SON
OF CATHERINE
& RICHARD

RIP
21 NOV 41
HMAS SYDNEY

area have about 3,000 acres under cultivation.

On New Ireland, the Japs are also growing foodstuffs and attempting to breed livestock. And on Bougainville, despite harassing attacks by Allied forces, they have extensive areas under cultivation.

Apart from the 90,000-odd Japs in the arc running east from Wewak to Bougainville, there are probably 18,000 of the enemy in Dutch New Guinea and many thousands more in the Halmahera Group, Celebes, Borneo, the Netherlands Indies, and the smaller Pacific islands which have been bypassed or are still being contested.

Thus the number of Japanese who exist as disciplined, organised armed forces between Australia and the Philippines is very great.

"These Japanese may be denied the means of continuing that aggression which carried them almost to this country's shores two years ago, but they are by no means impotent", says General Blamey.

"The United Nations' task will not be completed until these Japanese are rooted out, and no one with any experience of this enemy would suggest seriously that the cleansing of the islands from Japanese pollution is going to be an easy task.

"It will, without the slightest doubt, mean hard fighting and casualties.

"Too many people in Australia have been comforting themselves with the smug and easy assumption that Japan will seek a favourable peace when its ally Nazi Germany is destroyed."

They will not realise that any "favourable" peace that Japan sought would be favourable not to those who fought to save this country from the threat of another invasion, but favourable to Japanese hopes of making, later, another attempt to conquer the Pacific.

Disregard of the need to wipe out the Japanese colonies so near Australia would be equivalent, warns General Blamey, to "writing off almost as a complete loss all the sacrifices that our troops made in New Guinea and elsewhere in this area—the dead, the sick, the wounded, the men who by their service have jeopardised their entire future as civilians."

"DAWN STAND-TO"

by Sto. F. B. Keenan, HMAS Sydney

The Cross swings low in the darkness,
Grey veils writhe up from the sea,
Ghost lights gleam in the water—
The spirits of souls set free.

The lunge of the rolling vessel,
The dip of her masts and spars,
Arouses the lonely ocean
And echoes leap up to the stars.

A faint frail light is spreading
Far out on the Eastern Rim;
The reed-thin notes of the bugle
Stir shapes in the lingering dim.

Full watch is kept for the menace,
While night calls her shades of grey
Back through the deep sea curtains
Aflame with the stains of day.

AFTER BUNA, 1943

by Gnr. R. M. Quinn, NX19043

Season sere of spoliation,
Winter-drear defoliation—
Not for me.
Beneath eternal summer sky,
Rainy mist and singing wind,
Bury me and let me lie,
At one with savage kind.
Under stone and under tree,
He who sleeps, alone is free,
At one with th' eternal mind.
Far from man's mad devastation—
Ruin, stark, beyond salvation—
I would be.
Beyond remote Papuan hills—
Rivers running to the sea—
Rest me where not sorrow kills
Laughter in the heart of me.
Under vine and under tree
Now entwine my clay with thee,
At one with th' eternal hills.

Francis Bernard
Keenan 299 Barangaroo
Carlisle

Home Brew

SPORT OF KINGS

When, like everybody else, we were talking about the Melbourne Cup the other day, a dentist told me this story.

One day a man came to his rooms and asked if he had any platinum pins for sale. As it happened, he did, because he always used them in making false teeth. So he broke up a few unwanted false teeth and sold the pins to the visitor for fivepence each.

When the deal was complete the dentist asked the visitor what he wanted the pins for.

"I make electric batteries", the man said. "They have to be pretty small and these pins are just what I need. They're tiny, they conduct electricity and they're not affected by horse sweat."

"Why horse sweat?" asked the dentist.

"The batteries are for jockeys", the man replied, and departed.

CHALLENGE

The other sidelight on the seamy side of the Sport of Kings concerns an owner who suspected that his jockey was going to pull his horse in a race which he had a good chance of winning. Just before the horses went on to the track, the owner almost severed the reins and hissed to the jockey: "Now pull that horse if you dare." The horse won the race.

I won't vouch for this story. For a start, how could the jockey control the horse at the barrier with almost broken reins?

BRAINS LEAVE US

The steady stream of talented Australians leaving this country for better posts overseas is well on the way to becoming a raging torrent. Latest to go is Dr. Rupert A. Willis, world-famous cancer authority of Melbourne, who is to be Collins Professor of Human and Comparative Pathology at the Royal College of Surgeons, London—an extremely high post.

Dr. Willis' appointment has produced much comment on the rate at which Australia is losing her best brains, and why they go—better pay and facilities being two of the main reasons.

Scientists and doctors usually work more behind the scenes than leaders in other fields of human endeavour, but that is no reason why those who know their work should not recognise it financially and in other ways.

The Americans stand pretty high in medical research and should know the value of good work. Recently, I am told, an eminent American surgeon who visited Australia, said that his main aim was to meet "the man who wrote 'The Spread of Tumours in the Human Body'"—Dr. Willis. He met Dr. Willis and left Australia saying, "I am proud to be able to return to the States and say that I have met the man who wrote that book."

Notes on the Home Scene
by JUSTIN CIVVYS

I don't suggest that we should go in for a big blah-blah publicity policy. Far from it. This would achieve nothing. Scientists prefer to work quietly; moreover, much of their work means nothing to the layman. Spectacular results such as those obtained with penicillin—by another Australian, Sir Howard Florey—are rare and take years of plodding experiment, which would be hampered