

Timeline of Main Events (Part 2)

March to April 1941: It is believed that Eddie worked at Battalion Headquarters as a **batman** for Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Marlan. During a battle against the Germans at Barce in the Western Desert, Eddie received a bullet wound to his **abdomen**. Medical treatment enabled him to continue duties.

7 April 1941: Eddie was captured during a battle near Derna in Libya.

13 April 1941: Eddie was sent to a prisoner of war (POW) camp at Sabratha in Libya, and later to Capura in Italy.

Late June 1941 to April 1944: Eddie spent time in numerous POW camps and on the run as an escaped prisoner.

24 April 1944: Eddie was recaptured, with six other soldiers, near Biella in Italy. They were handed over to the Germans and Eddie was taken to a POW camp at Moosberg near Munich, in Germany.

31 May 1945: Germany surrendered and Eddie was transported on a British bomber plane to the United Kingdom as a recovered POW.

4 July 1945: Eddie boarded a ship in the United Kingdom and arrived in Sydney on 8 August.

Soldiers in Battle

Eddie gave the following account of a battle he was involved in, and his subsequent capture, during an interview with an army officer at the end of the war:

'About 6 April 1941, the 2/15 Infantry Battalion began to retreat from Barce... When we were about 20 miles west of Barce, we were directed by a provost (military policeman) in Australian uniform to split up, which we did—this was a German spy, later shot by our men... At about 10:00 hours on 7 April, we saw a convoy approaching, which we took to be our own unit returning. However, we were opened fire upon... After about an hour's fighting we were ordered by Lieutenant-Colonel Marlan to cease fire and lay down our arms. At this stage we were taken prisoner.

'From this point all the officers were separated from the other ranks (ORs). Then, the officers were put in transports and taken to Derna. I and two other ORs were also included in this party. The remainder were forced to march to Derna, arriving there a day after we did. This was about 9 April.

'After five or six days at Derna we were taken to Benghazi by the Germans and interrogated by them. Here, I was strung up by the hands for refusing to answer questions. I do not know if any of the others were treated in a similar manner, as we were separated for questioning. We were taken to Sabratha, a prison camp outside Tripoli. After three weeks there, we left Tripoli by the Italian boat Victoria and were taken to Naples and then to a prison camp at Capura in Italy.'



Private Eddie Albert
in 1945.