

## **THE CHOCOLATE SOLDIERS OF NEW GUINEA.**

(The terms "Chocolate Soldiers" or "Chocos" were used in ridicule concerning the raw inexperienced young militia men who were sent to New Guinea to help stem the Japanese advance. The following lines were written in vindication of, and admiration for them.)

The heat and the haze of the jungle  
Enshroud them on every side,  
The dank and the damp so insistent  
They contend with in youthful pride:  
Dark terrors are there in the lurking,  
In shady concealment they hide,  
But the defiant "Chocolate Soldiers"  
Have suffered, and bled, and died.

Through the trackless mountain passes,  
Through the deadly swampland drear,  
In the slush of endless mudlands  
They plod; and the enemy near  
Is crafty, and cunning and silent,  
But the "Chocos" have no fear  
As, shedding their blood in the jungle  
They fight for their country so dear.

And who will dare with sneering  
To say they cannot face,  
All this, and more if needs be  
For the honour of their race?  
And how can mind forget it,  
And how can time efface,  
Such valour must be given  
In history's page a place.



Poem by Albert (Bert) Lockrey.  
(Assistant Commissioner (Major) YMCA.  
Served in WW2, Australia, PNG, Solomon Is, Korea.  
WW2 1940-46, Korea 1952-53.)

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A.E.Lockrey.

**SERVICE RECORD**  
**WORLD WAR II, 1940-46**  
**KOREA, 1952-3**



**“BERT” LOCKREY**  
 In loving memory of  
**Albert Edward Lockrey**  
 Assistant Commissioner (Major) YMCA.  
 Served in Australia, PNG, Solomon Is., Korea.

1939-45	Pacific	The Defence	War Medal	Australia	AASM	Korea	United	Australia	Australian
Star	Star	Medal	1939-45	Service	1945-75	Medal	Nations	Service	Defence
				Medal	(Korea)		Medal	Medal	Medal
				(1939-45)			(Korea)	(1945-75)	
								(PNG)	





# HE NEVER WORE HIS MEDALS.

( A poem about our Dad and so many other service folk)

He served his country well enough  
through World War II, Korea,  
for goodness knows that it was tough,  
as each day brought new fear.

It was for country, family, friend,  
for freedom we enjoy today,  
they fought in wars, which had no end,  
those traumas in their lives to stay.  
*"And he never wore his medals".*

He'd changed when he came home to stay,  
reserved, his brighter side more rare  
and never marched on Anzac Day,  
those tales of war he'd rarely share.  
*"And he never wore his medals".*

Perhaps it was those flashback fears,  
barriers to a soldier's soul,  
a hope that time would wipe the tears,  
I'm sure the conflicts brought that toll.

He's gone, his story still not told,  
of what it meant to give those years  
they toiled for country, young and old,  
maybe to save us all more tears.  
*"And he never wore his medals".*

Some years ago, I found he never claimed  
six medals that he'd earned.  
For him, futility of war remained,  
No glory and few lessons learned.  
*"And he never saw those medals".*

On Anzac Day we take the time,  
remembering folk like him,  
who gave those years whilst in their prime,  
their memories shall not dim.  
*"That's why we wear his medals".*

Lyn Lockrey. (Anzac Day, 2001.)

## THE GREAT-COAT MAN.

I don't remember dad  
till I was five  
and he returned from war.  
Tall figure, wrapped in great-coat,  
slouch hat, kit bag,  
a stranger in our house.

He found it hard to settle,  
"civvies", strange to wear,  
moved along from job to job,  
so hard to reconnect  
with family he had left  
the day he volunteered.

"He'd changed", Mum said,  
his brighter side more rare,  
struggled with the stories  
he didn't want to share,  
for traumas,  
of those desperate years,  
lived on within his soul.

Just six years on  
they pleaded once again,  
so with great-coat,  
kit-bag, hat and fear,  
he departed for Korea.  
I wished I'd known him better,  
got to have him as a friend  
but wars had cheated  
all of us, no games to play,  
so hard for that to mend.

For years, some poems he'd penned  
lay hidden in his letters  
written home to mum.  
He sang so sweetly Dawson's songs,  
his voice, that verse,  
awaken special memories.

He left us all too soon,  
for cancer gripped his frame,  
but in the caring  
of those failing months, somehow,  
the broken bonds connected once again.  
He wanted to restore  
relationships quite frayed,  
the years he'd lost  
to senseless wars.

How strange,  
within his suffering came a healing,  
for weakened arms,  
held out in love cried, "sorry",  
without the need,  
for we all felt within those months,  
the mending of the years.

His words, quite sadly I recall,  
"Son, one day again, I'll see you all".  
He found the peace  
he'd searched for all those years.

His greatcoat still hung behind the door  
but in those later years,  
I knew my father more.

Lyn Lockrey.