

FUZZY WUZZY ANGELS

by Sapper Bert Beros

Many a mother in Australia,
When a busy day is done,
Sends a prayer to the Almighty
For the keeping of her son,
Asking that an angel guide him
And bring him safely back--
Now we see those prayers are answered
On the Owen Stanley Track.
For they haven't any halos,
Only holes slashed in their ears,
And their faces worked by tattoos,
With scratch pins in their hair.
Bringing back the badly wounded
Just as steady as a hearse,
Using leaves to keep the rain off
And as gentle as a nurse.
Slow and careful in bad places
On the awful mountain track,
The look upon their faces
Would make you think that Christ was black.
Not a move to hurt the wounded,
As they treat him like a saint;
It's a picture worth recording,
That an artist's yet to paint.
Many a lad will see his mother,
And husbands wee'uns and wives,
Just because the fuzzy wuzzies
Carried them to save their lives
From mortar bombs, machine-gun fire,
Or a chance surprise attack,
To safety and the care of doctors
At the bottom of the track.
May the mothers of Australia,
When they offer up a prayer,
Mention those impromptu angels
With their fuzzy wuzzy hair.

*Written 14th October, 1942, at Dump 66, the
first Range of the Owen Stanley.*

We were making steps up a very steep grade to enable the carriers to get out the wounded from the Iorabaiwa ridge. Seeing the way the natives looked after the wounded, Vic. said to me: 'There'll be a lot of black angels in heaven after this.' Next morning I wrote the 'Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.' The original I gave to my gunya (igloo) mate, Sapper Jack Smith, of Sydney, and the first copy to a native boy on the trail.