



*A civilian truck in use by an Army section daubed with the name Miss Tracy.*

he could bring fruit juice and ice to us. This was extremely important when one considers the arduous nature of our task and the heat in which it was performed.

Then we would check our platoon lines. A section had its own room, the soldiers sleeping on stretchers. Accommodation was primitive but in post-Tracy Darwin this was normal. These inspections were also important, for dirt meant sickness and sickness might rapidly spread. The need for clean living quarters was paramount. Following my inspection the platoon would do down to the CSM's parade and pick up the stores needed for the day's work.

In the meantime, trucks would start to arrive. The transport compound was located next to the orderly room and by the time we left Darwin it had become one of the landmarks of Larrakeyah. All traces of grass had disappeared from its surface and the daily arrival and departure of 120 trucks had transformed it into a quagmire. Each section had its own truck which assumed the personality and character of the soldiers who rode on it. This was illustrated by the graffiti painted on the side of the vehicles; *F Troop* or *Sunny's Slobs* to *Cuthie's Mob*. One truck had flames painted around the radiator in Flying Tigers fashion. Every conceivable colour was used. "Darwin Here We Come", "Darwin or Bust" and *Fred's Mob* emblazoned its sides. *This Five-Ringed Circus* was quite a colourful affair – some of the artistic creations that emerged would have put *Blue Poles* to shame.

At the conclusion of the CSM's parade soldiers boarded their vehicles and headed off to the task allotted them by their platoon commander. Upon arrival at his particular location the section commander met the homeowner (it was a requirement for those seeking Army help to be present when a clearance team arrived), ascertained what had to be done and then commenced the task. In the early days a team averaged two houses cleared per day