

# The Hydra: journal of the Craiglockhart War Hospital

No. 6 July 7th 1917

---

Contents	Page
▪ Editorial	2
▪ Notes And News	2
▪ Why We Are Winning	6
▪ The Apparition	6
▪ Mike	9
▪ A Shattered Hope	11
▪ The Chronicles of a V.O.S	12
▪ Concerts	18
▪ Photographic Notes	20
▪ Arrivals	21
▪ Departures	21
▪ Transfers	21

## EDITORIAL.

*[The Editor will be glad to receive any literary contributions and sketches. These may take any form, and may be signed or anonymous. They should be placed in the letter rack in the pigeon hole marked 'Editor,' and contributors are reminded that all copy should be in at least a week before the publication of the issue for which it is intended.]*

ALL the Editorial staff are in a state of collapse. Shortly after the publication of our last number they were sitting in the editorial sanctum thinking, with all the satisfaction which follows a noble act, of the warnings and prophecies they had just been inspired to give. After long and painstaking research, they had been able to state, without fear, that there were no cats in Edinburgh, and had been able to deduce therefrom a number of conclusions following one another in wonderful and logical sequence. Suddenly, without warning, the door opened slightly and there before their eyes were - were - standing in mute reproach - two kittens!

One kitten, perhaps, they might have borne, but two - ye gods! - they could not. Their reputation had been shattered, their name was mud. With a piercing shriek the editor flung arms to heaven and fainted, while the sub-editor, bounding from the room, was found later on the bowling green moaning piteously.

Their nerves are gone, and the sight of an editorial makes them dizzy, but it is hoped that by the next issue they will be able to undertake once more their prattling inconsequential padding.

## NOTES AND NEWS.

### Badminton.

There are still one or two enthusiasts who stick to the shuttle despite the calls made by out-of-door sports, but, naturally, the Badminton hall has not been very much patronised during the past fortnight.

### Lawn Tennis.

The interest in the tournament has rather slacked off; the games have not been played off quickly enough to maintain the enthusiasm which was so noticeable at first. Fair progress has been made with the singles, but the doubles go ahead but slowly. Probably the most exciting game played so far was that between Major Bryce and Mr Bishop. Started about three o'clock in the afternoon, it lasted through tea, and long afterwards, with varying

fortune, but in the end the Major laid his opponent out. Both players left the courts tired and bathed in perspiration, to find that Major Bryce should not have played Bishop at all!!!

We noticed "butterflies" on the hospital courts for the first time on Tuesday, the 26th of June - they were not *painted* ladies.

### **Golf.**

A medal round was played the week before last, and the Handicapping Committee subsequently got to work with the cards and fixed up the Club handicaps. This week a knock-out tournament has been played; there were twenty-three entries, and quite a number of good matches have been played, Scott and Donald having a particularly great game, the former securing a well-earned victory, two up and one to play. Another very interesting match was that between Major Bryce and Major Bingham. The C.O. was driving wonderfully, but his approach play was not good, and he eventually lost his match on the last green.

We cannot refrain from congratulating the O.C. Golf and his assistants (Capt. Hyland and Mr Donald) upon the management of their tournaments, both of which will have been played out in about a week. It is expected that some remarkably good golf will be seen in the semi-finals and final, but at the time of going to press these have not been played.

During the next week it is hoped to fix a match (foursomes and singles) with the Merchants of Edinburgh Club.

### **Billiards.**

The tournament has at last finished, the semi-finalists being Turner, M'Kenzie, Dyson, and Hislop. The match between the first two named proved an easy win for M'Kenzie, who, taking advantage of the running of the balls, played well and scored at a great rate.

Hislop played well in his game with Dyson, and the latter was distinctly unlucky in his leaves; Hislop thus entered the final.

The final, from a spectacular point of view, proved uninteresting, owing to the bad running of the balls, and M'Kenzie, with his generous handicap, won the tournament.

The fact of there being a bit of "wind up" was proved, inasmuch as 17 was the largest break.

Turner, in a friendly game the other evening, made a break of 52, of which 48 were scored off the red ball. We should imagine the latter feat is a record for the Hydro.

Players are asked to read the rules dealing with the time allowed for the various games, as recently two players used the "snooker" table for an hour and three-quarters while others were waiting to play.

## Swimming.

There is little, if anything, new to report. The little tiled hole in the floor of the basement is still as popular as ever. Water polo did not prove attractive; the project got no farther than the notice board.

We are surprised to learn that several of the patients of the Hydro, have found the hot weather so oppressing that they have had to discard their normal apparel and take to bathing costume, but the House Committee assure us that at least a dozen bathing slips have recently been removed from the baths, presumably for this purpose. The Committee have asked us to point out that it is strictly against regulations for officers to appear in public in bathing costume, and they hope in future the bathing slips provided may be left in the baths for the use of swimmers.

## Cricket.

The arrivals during the past fortnight have brought very welcome reinforcements to the cricketers, as previously, owing to the lack of cricket enthusiasts, it was at times difficult to put an eleven into the field. This was the case when the Hospital played Fettes on the 19th June, the team only being completed at the last moment.

Fettes batted first, and ran up a total of 228 for one wicket, to which we only replied with a modest 117. Dickinson, Downes, and Kershaw batted well, and were mainly responsible for our score.

Scores:-

*Fettes.*

R.G. M'Kerrow, b Kershaw	23
R.M. M'Conechy, not out	103
A.S. Lay, not out	83
D.A. Riddell, did not bat	
D.H. Prosser, did not bat	
T.S. Ross, did not bat	
J.C.S. Ponsford, did not bat	
W.G. Dean, did not bat	
G.T. Floyd, did not bat	
T.B. Harvey, did not bat	
R.A.M. Davidson, did not bat	
Byes 17, leg-bye 1, wide ball 1	19
Total	228

### *Craiglockhart War Hospital*

Evan, b Ross	5
Kershaw, c Lay, b Ross	17
Dyson, c Lay, b Ross	0
Lake, b Ross	1
Turner, b Harvey	0
Dickinson, c Ponsford, b Davidson	43
Downes, b Lay	40
Sadler, c Floyd, b Davidson	5
Lee, b Lay	3
Downs, run out	0
Mackenzie, not out	0
Bye 1, leg-byes 2	3
Total	117

### **Poultry.**

The chickens have made very great progress during the past fortnight, and are now looking wonderfully strong and healthy; otherwise there is very little, if anything, to report.

### **Gardening.**

The weather during the past fortnight has been just what was required for the deep, moist soil of the Hydro garden, and, though we suspect that gardens on light, shallow soils are somewhat in need of a refreshing shower, the plots under the care of the G. and P.K.A. could hardly look better. There is scarcely a weed to be seen, and insect pests and disease, so apt to put in an appearance at this time of the year, are conspicuous by their absence.

### **Acknowledgements.**

We have much pleasure in acknowledging the following donations to the Hospital:-

Miss Reid. Eggs.

Two Ladies (anonymous.) 2/6 towards poultry.

A Nurse. 5/- " "

## WHY ARE WE WINNING.

The affable professor hesitated as the commissionaire swung open the doors of the Athenaeum.

"Good morning, porter," he said, "your face is new here."

The porter sprung to attention. "Yes, sir," he rejoined, "just retired from the navy after thirty-four years' service."

"Dear me, that's a fine record!"

"Yes sir, served as man and boy for thirty-four years. Fine life the navy, sir."

"Ah, yes," murmured the professor. Then came the inevitable query, "And what do you think about this war, porter?"

"This was, sir" replied the porter, emphatically, "we'll win it, never fear."

"What makes you think so?"

"Well sir, it's like this; the Germans 'as tried all they knows to win, 'aven't they, sir?"

"Of course."

"And they 'aven't won much yet."

"Well."

"Well, sir, we've tried our best to lose, 'aven't we?"

"Alas, it seems too true!"

"And we 'aven't lost yet, sir, in spite of it. We don't know how to lose. So we've got to win, and we shall win. No cause to be down-hearted, sir."

And the professor passed into the halls of erudition to prepare a treatise on "The history of biology and its relation to the composition of the British national character."

S. P. O'C.

## THE APPARITION.

As the evening passed Mrs MacPhearson got more and more anxious. She strove in vain to knit, but at length gave up the effort, and, putting down her work, lay back in her chair, her eyes resting upon the pale careworn face of her daughter.

Poor Ida! Six weeks ago she had married Harry Vernon. It was a love match, and Ida had started off on her honeymoon one of the happiest girls in the world. What more could she want? She had wealth, position, any number of friends - and a devoted husband. There seemed nothing in the world to mar her happiness. But she had hardly reached her

destination when the blow fell. A short curt telegram sent Harry back to Aldershot by the first available train; within a few short days the mad dog of Europe had broken loose, and we were at war.

For a few weeks or so Harry was at Aldershot, and wrote daily; then the battalion moved for an unknown destination, and now only a few short hurried notes came through, at irregular intervals, from somewhere in France, while the air was full of wild rumours of heavy fighting, defeats, and casualties. Little wonder Ida's face had grown pale and careworn.

To-night Ida was restive and nervous, but what troubled her mother was the strange look which had come into her eyes as she sat there dreaming, a startled absent look which had never been there before, an expression which Mrs MacPhearson could not understand.

Suddenly Mrs MacPhearson sprang to her feet, for a change had come over Ida. She was now sitting quite upright, her body strangely stiff and still, breathing in short jerks; her face was absolutely ghastly, even her lips, which were slightly parted, had lost their colour, while her eyes were staring straight in front of her with a blank, absent stare.

"Ida, Ida, wake up!" cried Mrs MacPhearson, as she sprang to her daughter's side. But Ida neither heard nor saw her. She was just as though in a trance.

Mrs MacPhearson hesitated. Was it safe to wake the sleeper? No, it would be wiser to go indoors and telephone for the doctor, he could be round in five minutes. But she could not tear herself away, and before she had made up her mind Ida had collapsed in her arms.

"Ida, you are not well!" exclaimed Mrs MacPhearson anxiously.

For a moment Ida looked round with a dazed expression; then, in a terrified voice, she whispered, "Harry's dead - I saw him die."

"Wake up, dear," said Mrs MacPhearson, "you have been dreaming."

But Ida shook her head. It was too real - too awful - too complete in every detail for a dream.

"There he lay at my feet, his hair dishevelled, his tunic torn and covered with blood, his face pale as death, and a vacant stare in his eyes. He must have seen me too, for a smile came over his haggard face, his lips moved, and in a faint whisper he said, 'Good-bye, Ida, my dearest, good-bye.' Then, with the smile still on his face, his head fell back, his eyes closed - he was dead."

\*\*\*\*

Three weeks had gone by, and Mrs MacPhearson and her daughter once more sat dreaming in the garden as the twilight fell, for, though it was now late in September, the weather was still delightful.

Ida had, to a great extent, recovered from her shock, but nothing could shake her conviction that Harry was dead.

That something had happened to him was now quite obvious, for, although no official communication had come through, there had been no letters from him for a month, and, in view of great pressure of work at Whitehall, it was not surprising that his name had been overlooked.

What had happened to him? Mrs MacPhearson weighed up the possibilities in her mind. If it had been a wound he would have written as soon as he got into hospital; there was just the slender hope that the letter or letters might have miscarried, but it seemed more likely that Harry was either captured or dead. Dead – that brought back the memory of Ida's dream. Could it have been clairvoyance?

"Mother, look." Ida spoke in a terrified voice, which brought Mrs MacPhearson to her feet.

Ida was pointing towards the corner of the house. It was so dark that Mrs MacPhearson, looking in the direction indicated, could scarcely see the little gate which led round to the front of the house. She gasped. Was she, too, suffering from some strange delusion? She could scarcely believe her eyes – for the gate swung open as though guided by an invisible hand, and a ghostly figure stood in the gateway. Despite the dimness of the light, she could see that figure distinctly. Its faded, weather-worn uniform hung loosely from its wasted frame; its ghastly weather-beaten face, distorted with pain, was so clear that she could distinguish every feature. Yes, there could be no mistake – it was Harry's face.

Ida saw the apparition, too, and sprang forward to meet it.

Mrs MacPhearson would have screamed but her voice would not come – she made a desperate effort to stop her daughter's mad rush forward, but her limbs would not move. The sweat stood out in beads on her forehead as Ida threw her arms round the shadowy form. She saw a ghostly arm round her daughter's waist. Ida staggered, then seemed to be lifted off her feet. Then Mrs MacPhearson fainted.

When she recovered consciousness she was lying on the sofa indoors, and Ida was bathing her forehead with eau-de-cologne.

"What has happened?" said Mrs MacPhearson weakly.

"You have not been well," replied Ida, "but you are all right now, dear."

In a moment the events of the last half-hour came back to her: she could see that awful face still.

Ida saw the look on her face, and guessed what was passing in her mind. The tears glittered in her eyes as she whispered gently, "It is all right, dear, it was Harry; he is home – wounded."

"Was that Harry?" said Mrs MacPhearson, and the colour came back to her face as a merry voice from the back of the room replied, "What did you think it was – a ghost?"

LUNI.



## MIKE.

*(With apologies to all named Hunt)*

"You didn't know Mike? Not Mike Hunt?" asked the shoey, clearing his cheek.

"Well - yes, I'll tell you, but if ever you meet him, mind, not a word o' this," and the ex-sailor man, transferring the swelling from the right to the left side of his face, began.

"Poor ole Mike. He was a damned good sort, was ole Mike, taking him all round, as the sayin' is. We was laying at Codford at the time this 'append, 'long with the grey brigade o' infantry, and we gunners was the envy of the 'ole division. Shoot, lumme, why we made such a mess o' them targits at Lark'ill that the General 'e sent us all 'ome agin, at one'st. But we're gettin' off ole Mike. Well, 'e were one o' them there Red Cross coves, hattached for water-dooties. No one ever see 'im do any work, 'cept spit on 'is ole wheel-barrer tank an' rub it up.

"He was a saller lookin' fiddle-faced bloke, with tears in 'is eyes, very tall, no 'air on 'is chivvy, and thin as a yard o' pumpwater. His cap looked as though it was always jus' goin' ter fall orf, and when he larfed his face went all side-ways like.

"We used to chip 'im a lot, 'cos 'e would talk in 'is sleep, an' we used ter pretend 'e was always chattin' about the gals.

""Ow's Flossy s'mornin', Mike?' fellers would arsk when dressin'.

""Flossy?' e'd reply. 'What Flossy? I don't know no one by the name o' Flossy.'

An' 'e'd colour all up like a turkeycock. It'd begin at 'is neck, and 'avin' a long way ter go, it'd gradually creep up to 'is ears. By that time 'e was fair indignant, as the sayin' is.

""E'd sit down an' write miles o' letters, an' curious, too, they was always to gals, and one to 'is mother. There was a Miss Chibbles, a Miss Picker, a Miss Dooris Bugg - yes, a 'orrible name that - a Miss Lizzie Bowley, or - no, not that - an' it weren't Bailie either, and another, he let out once in a fit o' confidence, a gal with blue 'air and yaller eyes - lumme, now her name's gorn.

""Ow the ole parson got 'old of 'im I don't know, an' never did, but 'e did, an' ole Mike used to go roun' and sit with 'is tongue 'angin' out a-listenin' to 'im.

"In spite of 'is conversion, as the say'in is, us never seed 'im say any prayers to speak of. There was no doubt as 'e used her say 'em, and us allers reckoned as 'e 'opped out o' bed after lights went out. Anyway, ole Charlie's clasp knife went missin' one mornin', an' sev'ral little odds and ends started goin' west as well.

"But, lumme, the way' e'd snore, too, was summat 'orrible. Generally t'wards first thing, too, he'd start, just as every one was doing 'is best to crowd as much sleep into the last aff-hour before Revally. We started bunging things at him to stop 'im, but found it didn't pay, as we couldn't find 'em again arterwards, yet no one seed 'im catch 'em or even move in his bed.

Bill, a gunner pal o' mine, slung a curry-comb at 'im one early mornin', an' although 'e 'ad 'is back to Bill, 'e managed to duck 'is 'ed jus' in time an' went on snorin'. Bill's curry-comb tore a man's eye out in the next bed who was sittin' up larfin' at the time, an' 'e left the 'orspital five weeks later jus' in time to save losin' the other eye.

"O' course us didn't mind these 'ere little hepisodes in a manner o' speaking, but when the parson-man got 'old of 'im, that broke us all up, it did.

"It came on us all of a suddin-like. It was a dinner time, an' we 'ad all of us finished when suddinly - just like that, all of a suddin - ole Mike got up very solemn, an', with a face like a fiddle, carsts 'is eyes around the table an' cleared 'is throat. We never knew as 'ow it was prayers a-comin'. Bill, the feller wot chucked his curry-comb about, a most irreverent fellow, too, he burst out larfin', an' started to thump the bloomin' table, an' clap 'is 'ands. 'E said arter, 'e thort Mike was gwine to give a recitation or summat in that line, seein' as 'ow ole Mike always 'ad a penny song sheet in his pocket. Not knowin' what Bill was clamourin' an' makin' such a to-do about, an' seein' ole Mike still on 'is feet an' clearing 'is throat agin, everybody thought it was sumfin speshul an' joined in the hully-balloo.

"At last it all died down, an' ole Mike, clearin' 'is throat again, raised, without any warnin', mind you, his voice in song, as the sayin' goes. Well, it warn't 'zactly a song, it were a 'ymn. S'no good askin' me what 'ymn it was - I don't know no 'ymns, an' never did, but there was summat about a ice-cream mountain, and, well then - I don't know.

"Everybody was so surprised that it wuz sum moments 'fore they realised what wuz up. Ole Chicken-face - you remember ole Chicken-face the bloke wot offered ter fight the sergeant-major at the boxing-show, well 'im - 'e began to look around an' take stock o' the others at the table, an' then catchin' sight of ole Charlie opposite, who was a-tryin' not to pull 'is moostarsh out, an' Mike's face at the same moment - 'e 'ad a horrible squint, 'ad Chicken-face, his left eye was stuck, and the right used ter travel 'round an' peep out of 'is yerhole - well 'e suddinly dived under the table to find somethin' that wuzn't there. One by one the others all decided to help 'im, an' joined in the search, seein' as 'ow 'e'd been under such a long time, an' 'adn't found it. When ole Mike opened 'is eyes an' saw everyone on their knees, 'e knelt down, too, an' the 'ymn bein' finished, 'e clarsped 'is 'ands on the table, an' closin' 'is eyes agin, started off on a prayer about four miles long, all on one note, as one usually says.

""When you fellers are finished larkin' about under the table,' 'e began, 'we'll 'ave a few prayers.'

"So one by one we all of us 'ad to kneel up all respectable like, as you say sometimes, an' try an' keep from bustin'.

"This, of course, all sounds very dispectful, but I assure you if you'd been there yerself, you'd 'ave died o' laffin.

"Spud Brewer snuckled right out loud, an'ole Mike never so much as opened 'is eyes, but went right on and on and on, as you've 'eard it said.

"'Ow long exactly we wuz on our knees I dunno, but we wuz on 'em long 'nuff to lose the funny side of it, an' to feel our knees beginnin' to smart. The laffin died down by degrees, an' the fellers began to look roun' an' frown.

"Presently ole Bill, 'im of the curry-comb, yes, 'im, 'e 'eld 'is fist right up unner ole Mike's nose an' shook it. No, not 'is nose, but 'is fist. 'Ow long the prayer-meetin' would 'a lasted, 'eaven only knows, if it 'adn't been for old Puddin'-face, the insanitary man.

"It was at a most solemn an' 'eart-breakin' part o' the show, an' ole Bill's fist was trembling within an inch o' Mike's nose, when Puddin'-face give ole Bill a push.

"Ole Mike suddenly had a vision. Ole Bill's fist lifted 'is nose right up in the air an' back'ards. Losing 'is balance an' trying to save 'imself, ole Bill grabbed by the 'air to save 'imself, an' they both fell over on the floor. The others sprung up, upset the table on 'em, an' Mike, swinging up 'is arms to save 'isself, too, caught ole Chicken-face a fearful slosh wiv his fist right on 'is ear-'ole just as his right eye was a-peepin' out. If you'd a suddinly burnt a blind man's nose with a foozee, you couldn't 'a 'eard a more terrifying scream.

"Them wot was standin' in the door lookin' on say it wuz a terrible fight. They just rolled - the three of 'em - all over the floor an' each other, never letting go 'cept to hit one of themselves. First ole Chicken-face came up, then ole Bill came up an' Chicken-face disappeared. Then ole Mike come on top, an' then rolled underneath again. The floor was a sight, covered with bleed, likes their faces, their clothes wuz torn, their eyes all swollen an' full uv dirt; oh, they wuz in a mess.

"Suddinly the voice of the sergeant-major yelled an angry blast at 'em from the door, an' 'as 'e come in, they let go an' sat up. 'Wot's all this, I'd like ter know?' 'e arsk in his narsty snarlin' voice. 'Fightin'? Oh, an' why wuzn't you all on the 2 pipemma parade? Orderly room, the lot uv you, an' if you ain't on parade in three minutes I'll clink the three uv yur.'

"Ole Mike still 'as 'is dowts as to Bill an' 'ow it all started, although they're good friends now, but us 'aven't 'ad no more prayer-meetin's from Mike since, an' I reckon 'e's wiv me on this that a week's pay an' fourteen days C.B. wuz a long price for the luxury."

## **A SHATTERED HOPE.**

True, I have much comfort gazing on thee,  
Much too, perhaps, in thinking I might have thee

Nearly myself, a fellow soul to live with,  
But weighing well a man's frail and perilous tenure  
Of all good in this restless, wavy world,  
Ne'er dare I set my soul on anything  
Which but a touch of Time can shake to pieces.  
Alone, in the Eternal is my hope!  
Took I thee? That intensest joy of Love  
Would soon grow fainter and at last dissolve,  
But, if I yielded thee, there is something done  
Which from the crumbling earth my soul divorces,  
And gives it room to be a greater spirit.  
There is a greater pang, methinks, in Nature  
When she takes back the life of a dead world,  
Than when a new one severs from her depth  
Its bright revolving birth. So I'll not hoard thee,  
But let thee part, reluctant, though in hope  
That greater happiness will thence arise.

SYNJIN.

## **THE CHRONICLES OF A V.O.S.** (Very old Subaltern.)

By "JACK POINT"

### **CHAPTER X.**

#### **MESS PRESIDENCY AND JONES.**

I took over the exalted office of Mess President from the boy of the name of Peter Threadneedle - we called him Peter because he was such a boy that he never grew up - and you will hear more of him later. For the present, he was an extremely happy boy, as it was his pleasant duty to pile up my table with one ledger, one note book, one file, one cash box, with many other things, which I have since been only too pleased to forget, and then to clear off to East Springley with a view to going overseas. I am not a great hand at accounts myself (as any of my brother officers will tell you), but Peter - O Lord! it took weeks to get them right. Now, I don't want to be personal, but I do want to give you some sort of idea of what a Mess President feels like, and so I will take the drawbacks and compensations of Mess Presidency

in turn, quite impersonally, and review them for your benefit. Of course, the Mess President has always the hollow satisfaction of putting the letters P.M.C. after his name. He can dun anybody, even his Commanding Officer if necessary, be the payment of his mess bill a moment overdue. (I may here remark that, for such an experiment, he will be well advised to select his Commanding Officer with care - Major Blackburn, for instance, is not the right sort to try it on.)

He has a Mess Sergeant, several waiters, and a cook under him, to whom he may refer airily as "his staff." Above all, he has a pleasing sense of responsibility which entitles him to look as worried as he pleases, and to be rude to his juniors at breakfast.

But he has several accounts to keep - and to keep correctly, or the Commanding Officer will want to know the reason why. He has any number of brother officers to feed - and they all expect to be fed well and cheaply at the same time, and when there's a war on this is no joke. It is quite a possibility, too, that they are endowed each with his own particular fad. For instance "A" fancies bacon for breakfast, "B" prefers fish, and "C" wants eggs.

The poor P.M.C., who has been relegated to a single course breakfast, is expected to pander to all their wants at one time.

There was once a P.M.C. - I won't give his name - who tried to curry favour with Major Blackburn, by getting him kippers for his breakfast. Unfortunately, the kipper which graced Major Blackburn's plate had been taken out of the sea rather earlier than the P.M.C. had bargained for, poor chap. He entered the room at the very moment when the Major got his first whiff of it....

It hit the P.M.C. in the face.

You will see by this that Mess Presidency can be summed up into accounts and bickerings, and, after all, I really do not think it is worth while for us to pursue such a painful subject further.

I am, as I said, useless at accounts, and if there's one thing I positively hate, it is bickering.

Take warning, ingenuous youth, when you read these words of wisdom, and if they ever try to make you a P.M.C., go into your room, take out your revolver and shoot yourself. You will find it by far the less unpleasant in the long run.

I cannot leave the recruit detachment without saying a few words on our detachment Sergeant-Major.

He is a man in a thousand.

He is supposed to be one of the best hands at dealing with recruits that the regiment can show, and, indeed, his methods of enforcing discipline are little short of marvellous. It is his boast that the men whom he cannot keep in order never have existed, and never will exist, but that in spite of this his name has never figured as evidence against a man for over fifteen

years. Young officers find him a veritable mine of information - though he sometimes, I am sorry to say, so far forgets himself as to make statements for their information which I cannot, even by the longest stretch of imagination, call true.

Once a morbid youth asked him the orders for the burial service.

Quick as thought, the great man replied: "It's this way, sir," swelled out his chest, and delivered himself as follows: "As the corpse leaves the mortuary, semi-tary, dead-'ouse, or what-not, you all springs smartly to attention, countenances melancholy, mournful and subdoo-ed!" - and the fool believed him!

The detachment Sergeant-Major has also been given credit for the authorship of that celebrated order for the "Creed" in Church which runs: "When the 'oly man pronounced them words 'I believe,' I don't want to see a move hanywhere - them words 'I believe' is cautionary! But on the command 'Gawd the Father,' yer all turns smartly to the left or right, has the case may be, making 'eels tell!"

Of course, this is rather in the line of a blasphemy, so let us hope the Sergeant-Major did not really originate it.

Major Blackburn left for the front during the second month of my stay at West Springley, and Captain Jones-Vandellent, M.C., took over command.

Strange as it may seem, Jones-Vandellent was junior to myself - although I was only a subaltern - and the reason was as follows.

He had been made a temporary captain under some new regulation which enabled him to keep his rank, even while not with the unit he had been made temporary captain in, and this with the strange result, that, although for the time being he was my Commanding Officer, I would once again have been senior to him supposing we had both suddenly been made full captains.

And this was a little fact which Captain Jones-Vandellent, M.C., often forgot.

He is masquerading in funny-coloured tabs, and may possibly have succeeded in deluding some people not gifted with the ordinary amount of brains into believing he is a real staff officer. But if I ever meet him as an equal, I shall patronise him, and call him Jones, plain Jones.

Oh! I'm a revengeful devil, I know, but, as I remarked some way back, while on the subject of Joan and Chris Ormston, even a V.O.S. has his self-respect to keep up. I do not think there was a single thing about Jones which did not annoy me - his sleek, auburn hair, which he kept so exquisitely curled - his "hard riding" whiskers - his horrified peach and cream complexion. I compared him with other Green Fusilier Captains I had known - Neave, Masterman.

Surely Masterman rose from his grave in Flanders, and shook his fist on the day when this foolish and self-opinioned child was malelevated to his own rank?

One evening after mess our conversation turned on the stage, with the result that the Acting Adjutant went to sleep in his chair.

Many plays were discussed, and among others the Christmas play which I knew so well.

Jones had seen it, and had liked it, for which I would have given him a good mark, had he not started on Pauline. Of course, he knew or thought he knew - all about her, little thinking that I really did.

He could even (though this shocked him deeply) tell us the very name of the man who -

Oh, my dear Pauline, I take no credit for what I did, for I did not truly know what I was doing, and besides, I had only struck him twice in the face when the room started to go round and round just as the aerodrome had done.

Again my enemy had the best of the argument.

The same Medical Officer whom you met for a few lines in my first chapter, kept me a week in bed, and then sent me up the hill to Headquarters, where I have been ever since.

And it was there and then that the writing of this book began.

## **CHAPTER XI.**

### **UNCLE TOM'S COMPANY.**

Now, when I came up to Headquarters, at East Springley, I was attached to "Q" Company, commanded by Uncle Tom.

I beg your pardon, I have overshot the mark. I meant to tell you first that the incident which marks the close of my last chapter was entirely hushed up. I will say, in defence of Jones, that he had the pluck to go to the C.O. about it - and a pretty sight he must have been, coming into the orderly room with a black eye, and a cut lip, and a decidedly swollen nose. I flatter myself that my fist is no mean one, and resembles quite closely enough for you to notice it at first sight, the proverbial leg of mutton.

What the C.O. had to say to him I do not profess to know - he certainly had a lot to say to me, as soon as I was well enough to listen to it, on the subject of discipline, "conduct to the prejudice," and example to young officers, but he said it, I fear, more from a sense of duty than as an expression of his own personal feelings, and the subject has never been reopened between us since.

I believe, as a matter of fact, that Jones has given a lecture on chivalry, on what an officer's and a gentleman's views should be with regard to the opposite sex, and lastly on discretion.



I am not sure whether this is so or not; but if it is, then the last clause in my Colonel's sermon must have been very painful to Jones, for Jones considered himself quite the discreetest thing that had ever honoured a so-so world with its presence.

Pah! - "the incident is closed."

I do not consider Jones as being a true Fusilier, and I never shall -

I will waste not another dip of ink on the fellow !

Uncle Tom was a very different type - he was the old Fusilier *par excellence*. A stern believer in the old senior officer's creed which runs -

"I believe that all subalterns are creatures of the evil one. That their souls - *if* they possess souls - are the property of the adjutant, and are kept locked in the orderly room safe, till their Satanic Creator shall have need of them."

I think there is more of the senior Officer's creed than this - with regard to subalterns - but from what I remember of it, it had better remain untold, as it might give you a bad impression of Uncle Tom. Uncle Tom had - or has, for he still exists, though now as Major Tom - innumerable *bon mots* to his credit. It was he who told the talkative "Wart" - who had only shared the company's fortunes for a week - that young officers could not help being seen, but there was no reason why they should be heard. It was he who, when another new addition to H.M. Forces came to him in the middle of "paying out" - a foolish time to approach any Company Commander - and started with "please, sir, would it be convenient -" replied, "No, it wouldn't."

The poor lad who had come to ask for an afternoon's leave ran for his life - for Uncle Tom can look very fierce - and he would never have had the courage to apply for leave then, or at any other time, had not Uncle Tom, out of the kindness of his heart, sent me to find out what he really wanted.

I was Uncle Tom's "Minister of the Interior," as he called me.

This is a job usually performed by the Company Second in Command - or "Second Captain," and great was the disgust of sundry dashing captains who were attached to the company during my time in it. For various reasons Uncle Tom would have none of them.

One had been a prominent author.

"What?" said Uncle Tom, "let him run the pay? Damn it, man, he writes books - can't have a damned ink-slinger running my accounts!"

Another had the wrong sort of moustache.

"Wouldn't trust a man with a moustache like that, a yard - what? - run off with the spondulicks - what?"

A third had too big a nose.



"Never knew a man with a big nose who could run the interior economy of a company!"

Uncle Tom used to stroke his own magnificent proboscis when he said this.

Of course, there are exceptions, I suppose, to all rules - even Uncle Tom's.

To see Uncle Tom shocked was to see him at his best, he did enjoy it so.

There was a rare old scandal on in the papers at this time, and in odd moments he was wont to make me read it out to him. He would sit chewing the stem of his "Dunhill," and curling and uncurling his long thin legs in an ecstasy.

The heroine had such a *sweet* name for her victim - "my jewel boy," she used to call him, and for weeks I had only to come up to Uncle Tom, to salute, and to say, "Company Commander's Jewel Boy reported present, sir," to make him play up.

"What wha-at? Jewel boy? Haw! haw! haw! my Go-od-jewel boy? what? kissed him? She kissed him? - *ouch!*" (Here he usually spat with disgust - if we were out of doors, or near enough to the store for him to take an easy shot.)

"Kissed him? haw! haw! my Go-od! *ouch!*"

"D'ye hear that, Quartermaster-Sergeant?" Company Quartermaster-Sergeant Braize would swing round in his chair, take his pipe out of his mouth, and reply, "Sir," just as if Uncle Tom had been asking him some question on the company accounts, and then Uncle Tom would feel ashamed of himself and tell me to shut up.

We used to call the C.Q.M.S. "Lord Braize" - only behind his back, of course - because of his lordly appearance. He always suggested to one, well fed, easy opulence, and always looked *so* good humoured. Only once, on Christmas night at the sergeant's dance, did his lordship - No! *Lord* Braize's character *shall* be safe in my hands. He was a pearl among Quartermaster-Sergeants.

In Uncle Tom's company office used to hang a notice which ran as follows:-

OFFICERS

are requested to remember that the name of this regiment is the  
GREEN FUSILIERS

Not the "Greens."

Nor the "G.F.s."

All newly arrived "Warts" were invited to study it, and I once - after I had left Uncle Tom for my present job - heard of a young officer who had been compelled to copy it out a dozen times for talking about the "Greens" twice in one morning. I told the Colonel, who exclaimed, "Gad - that's great!" and laughed for ten minutes on end.

The only captain who really suited Uncle Tom was Leslie - and this was not strange, seeing that Leslie had started life in the army as one of Uncle Tom's subalterns, and had been drilled into shape by him while still young and pliable!

Leslie was a great tactician, and I shall try presently to give you an idea of the grand demonstration which he, Uncle Tom, Hammond, and the Elder Twin hatched out between them.

But, for the moment, "'old 'ard," I am going to warm my frozen hands at the fire and smoke a cheap cigarette before I commence another chapter. The temperature is at zero, and writing is no joke this evening.

*(To be continued.)*

## CONCERTS.

The concert of 23rd June was, as is usual with our entertainments, a great success. It is regretted, however, that a number of items had to be cut out owing to the lateness of the hour, but we hope to hear these artistes at a later concert. The programme was opened by the orchestra, who played "Teddy Bears' Picnic" with some dash. It is one of the best things the orchestra has played to us. The additional cornet was a distinct acquisition. The curtain then rose on Capt. Sampson, who gave us a very mystifying and clever entertainment; if this gentleman plays cards, we should suggest that he be watched very carefully during the game.

Mr Crocker then sang "The Admiral's Broom" in good style, and was followed by Miss Thomson, who sang "Down Here" and "An Open Secret," in a very sweet voice and with great taste. We should have liked to hear her sing again.

Mr Scotchburn then came on the scene as the "Gladiator," and excelled in it. He was in great form, and we were glad that he was such a glad gladiator. Whistle, please!

The orchestra then played a selection from "The Girl on the Film," which was received with great applause by the audience. Specially fine was the gavotte passage.

A new farce, entitled "Indispensable," was next produced, and was much appreciated by the audience. Mr Geo. Campbell and Lieut. Cormack sang very well, although not given very much scope. Mr R.C.H. Morrison and Mr John Norrie caused much amusement, and the very numerous members of the caste all contributed to make the farce a success.

The programme was brought to a close by the orchestra, who played the very well-known waltz, "The Druids' Prayer," in a manner which made the body instinctively sway to the

music. "God save the King" was then played, and the concert was brought to a close after a very fine evening's entertainment.

The concert on 30th June was an even greater success, and was thoroughly enjoyed by a most enthusiastic audience.

The orchestra opened the programme with a gavotte entitled "True Love," which was played very briskly, and then Mr Crocker sang "Tommy Lad." He seemed less nervous and sang better than in the previous concert.

Mr Boulby gave a humorous monologue, "The Three Trees," and ably assisted by the pianist, caused great laughter and applause, and had to return to give an encore. The next item was a quartette, consisting of Mrs Turner, Mrs Bell, Mr Bussell, and Mr Ferguson, who sang "Strange Adventure," from the "Yeomen of the Guard," very nicely.

Signaller Milner next followed and sang "The Song of the Wagoner" in splendid style. He was applauded in a manner which called for an encore in no uncertain fashion; in response he sang "Gee up, Dobbin." Miss Goldie Scott sang "The Nightingale," in which her voice was heard to advantage, and then Mr Boulby again appeared with "Take me down Piccadilly" in his usual inimitable style, was loudly applauded, and had to reappear for an encore.

Miss Scott then sang "A Banjo Song" very tenderly, and was followed by Signaller Milner, who sang "Shipmates o' Mine" with great expression, and was received with very loud and persistent applause. As an encore he gave us "Three for Jack," which was also very much appreciated.

The next item was an exhibition of conjuring and trickery by Capt. Sampson, who again gave the audience something to think about.

The Orchestra then played some Scotch airs in a very spirited manner, and there were many of the audience who would have liked to "face up" for a foursome or eightsome reel.

Next came a burlesque of "Leah Kleschna," one of the funniest items we have seen at any of the concerts here. Every member of the caste went into their work in the right spirit, with a result that it was a perfect scream from start to finish. Capt. Bee made a very good burglar - it must have cost him some money to colour his nose. Mr Pocket played Schram in a style which reminded us of Mr George Formby, and kept the audience in roars of laughter at his antics. The part of Sylvaine was well played by Mr Matthews in a very parson-like manner, while the character of Raoul was played by Capt. Markham with great success. Capt. Sampson, Mr Robin, Mr Bussell, Mr Rouse, and the various other members of the caste who played the parts of policemen or butlers, made the best of their opportunities. The title role of the piece was played by Mr Scotchburn, the author, who makes a splendid Mrs May, and who convulsed the audience whenever he was on the stage. Great credit is reflected on the author, producer, and the gentlemen behind the curtain, who do great work, but are never seen or heard of. We hope soon to have another farce from the same author.

We regret that the conductor of the orchestra has now left us to join his battalion. During the time he was conductor he brought the orchestra up to its present standard, and we feel he could receive no greater praise. We wish him the best of luck. We should also like to thank all the members of the orchestra, and all who have helped in many ways towards the success of our concerts. They have put in a great amount of hard work, and spent many hours rehearsing for our benefit, and we feel very grateful to them.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC NOTES.

So much interest is at present being taken in photography, that a few short notes dealing with the gentle art may prove acceptable. The first worry that the amateur encounters, after having got his camera and film or plates, is what exposure is necessary. And usually this is settled by debate among his friends. There is really no reason for this sort of hit-or-miss work, as there are several excellent meters that quite obviate guesswork, and enable the amateur to produce good photos. To mention one or two, there are the Imperial meter, at 1s.; Burroughs & Wellcome meter and diary, full of useful information, at the same price; and there is the Watkins Bee meter, at 3s.6d., a most useful thing. They are not at all bulky things, and well worth purchasing.

The amateur will be well advised to practise, before he puts in his film, the art of holding the camera and snapping. Having succeeded at, say,  $1/25$  sec., he should carry on up to  $1/5$  sec., and he will find himself amply repaid when the occasion arises in which he has no stand or anything suitable to rest his camera on; it is only then that confidence obtained by practice is fully realised.

One important fact to constantly bear in mind is not to hurry; the view-finders are not always true, as many of us have found to our cost, and it is essential, therefore, to get the object pretty well centralised. If the object is long laterally, the best view is probably obtained by turning the camera on its side. This, of course, affects in the main only film and some kinds of plate cameras; other plate cameras have focusing screens which enable one not only to see exactly what will be included in the picture, and to adjust the focus to a nicety, but also to see what size of stop in the diaphragm will give the best result. While talking of stops, do not be afraid to stop down even to F 32 if a view with much depth is being taken, and the proper exposure can be given, but it must be remembered that as the diaphragm is closed the exposure is considerably lengthened. For instance, if the correct exposure with F 8 is  $1/16$  sec., with F 16 it will be necessary to give  $1/4$  sec., and with F 32 a second; in other words, with F 16 we must give four times, and F 32 eight times the amount of exposure that we must give with F 8. On the other hand, care must be taken in using very large apertures, for not only do we lose definition, but there is a risk of a phenomena called halation

## ARRIVALS.

Majors:- C.H. Bingham, R.G.A.; A. French, R.A.M.C.

Captains:- C. Sampson, R.A.M.C.; T.J. Stevens, West Yorks.; G.D. D'Arth, R.E.; C.R. Sheriff, D.L.I.; F.G. Gilling, King's Liverpool.

Lieuts:- E. Cann, A.S.C.; G. Kay, R.F.; C.E. Toovey, R.E.; F.W. Wills, R.W. Kents; W.R. Goodman, R.E.A. Wright, K.R.R.; F.H. Kirby M.G.C.; E.C. Keevil, Wilts.; G.M. McEwan, Cameron Highlanders.

2nd Lieuts:- J.B. Salmond, Black Watch; G.A. Taylor, London R.; C.O. Rhind, K.O.S.B.; H.S. Butler, Notts. and Derby; T.V.J. Davidson, Devons.; F.G. Crocker, Norfolks; G.N. Wade, Worcesters; C.F. Lushington, R.F.A.; L. Horder, R.F.A.; J.C. Isacson, R.F.C.; W.E. Owens, Manchesters; E.R.D. Nagel, R.F.C.; T.E. Lewis, Sherwood Foresters; W. Oliver, R.E.; J.E. Wilkins, K.R.R.; C.W. Birdwell, Wilts.; J.H. Lytton, R. Irish R.; J.M. Robertson, Gordon Highlanders.

## DEPARTURES.

Captain:- A.T. Dawson, R.F.A.

Lieuts:- E. Peacop, Canada; T. Shoultz, Canada; W.R.C. Snape, Leicester; G.W. Williams, Australians.

2nd Lieuts:- Ambler, R.G.A.; Mathews, M.G.C.; S. Howarth, Yorks.; E.O. Christopher, Yorks. and Lancs.; D.G. Gliddon, N.F.; J. Wilson, K.O.S.B.; G. Clarke, Worcesters; B.J.C. Hamm, Worcesters.

## TRANSFERS.

*Bowhill.*

Lieuts:- G.L. Wells, R.G.A.; R. Evans, M.G.C.; W.R. Goodman, R.E.

2nd Lieuts:- J. Harraton, D.L.I.; H.P. Nicholl, Leicester; J.H. Lytton, R. Irish R.; A.P. Laing, R.E.; W. Oliver, R.E.; D.L. Clementson, Pembroke Yeomanry.

*Lennel.*

2nd Lieut:- C. White, D.L.I.